

# Opportunity Capturing from Social Entrepreneurial Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examined opportunity capturing from social entrepreneurial perspectives. Social entrepreneurs are known to possess a number of antecedents such as empathy, societal moral obligation, self-efficacy and prior experience. A cross sectional survey was employed using twenty-seven (27) Non-Governmental organisations (NGO) in Jos. The owners and employees of the NGOs constituted the unit of analysis who were two hundred and ninety-six (296) in number. Multiple regression analysis was performed to ascertain the contribution of the predictor variables on the outcome. The results revealed that empathy and social moral obligation have negative relationship with opportunity capturing. Characteristics such as self-efficacy, social support and prior experience do have strong positive relationship on opportunity capturing. The implication is that self-efficacy, social support and prior experience are more critical to opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. Individuals with these prosocial personalities will be quick in identifying social problems and responding immediately to solve such problems.*

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**Keywords:** Empathy, Opportunity Capturing, Prior Experience, Self-Efficacy, Social Support, Social Entrepreneurship and Societal Moral Obligation,

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## 1.0 Introduction

The concept of opportunity is at the heart of entrepreneurship and the ability to capture opportunity is necessary (Ketchen, Shook, & Ireland, 2010). The need to pursue and response to given opportunities quickly and utilizing them to achieve better firm growth (Short, Ketchen, Shook, & Ireland, 2010) cannot be overemphasize. It is very important for overcoming adversity and turning organizational and societies' instability and failures into more flourishing and stable communities (Buheji, 2018). While some social problems are created by predictable events such as weaknesses of institutions (e.g., corruption, education, or health provision) , others are created by unpredictable events such as wars, crisis, genocide, bushfires, hurricanes and typhoons which can create an immediate and dire needs among unprepared citizens and communities. In high uncertainty environments, opportunities surface and vanish quickly (Choi & Shepherd, 2004). These opportunities for social improvement might be fleeting if they are not captured quickly. Not all individuals or firms are able to identify or discover meaningful or valuable opportunities, hence the question that has long been on the mind of entrepreneurship scholars-why do some individuals capture opportunity while others do not? In the specific context of social entrepreneurship, the same question is raised why do some individuals capture social entrepreneurial opportunities while others do not?

Social entrepreneurial opportunities are opportunities that are not found in commercial markets but are rooted in social sector markets

(Robinson, 2006) it makes them a special case of opportunities. Social opportunity exists due to the prevalence of human needs in society (Zahra, et al. 2008). The problems of poverty as well as many other social problems are both widespread and easily observable. For instance, there is global wealth disparity such that many of the world's poor, illiterate, and sick live in developing countries (Zahra et al., 2008). It is sad that the story of extreme poverty in today's world is largely about Africa. According to Kharas, Hamel and Hofer (2018), Africans already account for about two-thirds of the world's extreme poor. If current trends persist, they will account for nine-tenths by 2030. Fourteen out of 18 countries in the world—where the number of extreme poor is rising—are in Africa. Kharas, Hamel and Hofer (2018) while presenting their Brooking Reports in June 2018 reported that Nigeria has already overtaken India as the country with the largest number of extreme poor in early 2018. At the end of May 2018, their trajectories suggest that Nigeria had about 87 million people in extreme poverty, compared with India's 73 million. What is more, extreme poverty in Nigeria is growing by six people every minute, while poverty in India continues to fall.

Due to the failure of government at all levels to solve the incessant social needs of societies, individuals and groups of individuals who are concerned about these issues have emerged to change and transform the world (Bornstein, 2004; Santos, 2012). Armed with alternative innovative methodologies in solving societal problems (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Doherty, Haugh, & Lyon, 2014), they have

provided and are providing basic needs like access to clean water, food, clothing, shelter and employment to socially excluded people in their community. These individuals are called social entrepreneurs and their contributions are progressively being recognised (Spear, 2006; Shaw & Carter, 2007).

Empirical research on opportunity capture is grossly inadequate. Tassang, Muhideen, Ashu, Abosi, and Yuzhen (2019) studied social entrepreneurship opportunity capture using social network theory. Also, Buheji (2018) examined opportunity capturing by utilizing the alertness psychology of the entrepreneur along with problem solving techniques and optimizing the social capital that each opportunity brings. For a number of reasons, we took a different approach. First, because of heterogeneity of interest (self-interest and others interest) we utilized the theory of social entrepreneurship in examining the concept of opportunity capturing. Hockert (2015) is of the view that there are certain characteristics that are specific to social entrepreneurs. Such unique characteristics are linked to an individual's ability to feel empathy, societal moral obligations, self-efficacy and perceived social support as relevant predictors of social entrepreneurship. Ip, Wu, Liu, and Liang (2017) examined how Hockert's characteristics are associated with social entrepreneurial intentions. Secondly, research has shown that individual-level attributes influence opportunity perception (Kwon & Arenius, 2010), hence, we argue that social entrepreneurial antecedents are expected to predict opportunity capturing. Therefore, this article seeks to examine whether the antecedents of social entrepreneurship

enhances opportunity capturing among social entrepreneurs.

### 1.1 Theoretical foundation

This study is firmly anchored on the positive theory of social entrepreneurship as espoused by Santos (2009). This theory is largely drawn from the 'Theory of Moral Sentiments' by Smith (1976). The theory argues persuasively that individual behavior is influenced by the social and relational contexts of the individuals. Human beings have an ability to imagine themselves in others situations and thus empathize with their plights as well as take pleasure from their success. Others-interest is a driver of behavior for economic action to others.

The theory is based on the behavioral heterogeneity of interests. That there are two main drivers for behavior:

- Self-interest in which individuals derive utility from improving one's welfare
- Others interests in which individuals derive utility from improving the welfare of other members of society. This is not based on broad notion of public interest but on the specific notion of desire in “bettering their situation”

The strength of each driver varies among individuals as some people may have more propensity for self-interest while others may have more propensity for others-interest. It is useful to note that these propensities may change over time given contextual factors. One such factor relates to cultural norms and is often shaped by the theories people espouse. Other factors are based on individual experiences (how people see others behaving) and resource

endowments (how much wealth people already have). These factors do change the central argument that at any given point, individuals will derive their utility from a balance of self-interested and others-interested outcomes. This balance is specific to each individual and shapes the types of activities and organizational behavior in which he/she engages.

At the population level, we will thus find heterogeneity of interests, which may account for the heterogeneity of organizational firms that are present in the economic system. Naturally, individuals who have a similar balance of self and other interest will tend to associate together for organized action. This balance will determine the type of activities that they will engage in and the type of organization that they will create. Specifically:

- Individuals who place a strong weight on self-interest will tend to associate together in the context of organizations that are focused on value appropriation (for-profit-organisations) – being run to maximize the benefits for their owners, independently of the legal form they exhibit (publicly traded firms, new enterprises, partnership, cooperatives).

- Individuals who place a strong weight on others-interest will tend to associate together in the context of organisations that are focused on value creation (social entrepreneurship) – being run to maximize the benefits for others in society, independent of the potential for value appropriation. These can typically take the form of social activist organisation or social entrepreneurship organization.

The paper argues that opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship could be leveraged by the antecedents of social entrepreneurs to feel empathy, have societal moral obligations, self-efficacy, perceived social support and past experience to create value for others.

## **2.0 Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

### **2.2 Empathy**

According to one of the leading experts in the field of Emotional Intelligence, Goleman (2011) the concept of empathy as one of the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence simply means thoughtfully considering others' feelings, along with other factors when making intelligent decisions. It is the manifestation of a symbiotic fusion between affective and cognitive responses to another's condition whereby a sense of understanding, kinship and engagement occurs naturally and on a level-playing field. Empathy is also viewed as the natural ability to understand the emotions and feelings of others, whether one actually witnessed his or her situation, perceived it from a photograph, read about it in a fiction book, or merely imagined it (Decety & Jackson, 2004;).

In social entrepreneurship, Wood (2012) indicated that empathy is a key driver for supporting social ventures and stresses social innovation. Empathetic entrepreneurs habitually have dynamic elements that are critical for success, plus the capacities to influence employees, help employees in the management of workplace stress, increase higher customer satisfaction by understanding customers' wants, and achieve higher innovativeness (Humphrey, 2013).

The word empathy is in a way synonymous to compassion which is seen as the process of noticing someone else's pain, empathetically understanding it, and responding in some way designed to alleviate it (Frost, Dutton, Worline, & Wilson, 2000); Kanov, Maitlis, Worline, Dutton, Frost, & Lilius, (2004). This situates empathy in the process of compassion. Similarly, Miller, Grimes, McMullen, and Vogus, (2012) see compassion as a known activator of cognitive processes such as integrative thinking which rejects dichotomized solutions and instead promotes a more holistic recognition of problems and potential solutions. As a result, social entrepreneurs engage in a unique process of social entrepreneurial opportunity recognition which is pro-socially motivated when an emotional association to others brings up integrative solutions to apparently intractable social problems, encourages the commitment needed to undertake demanding and difficult responses. This means that empathic concerns, causes the desire to help out (Stephan & Finlay, 1999).

However, Trout (2009) submits that empathy can be a good place to start but not to finish because it cannot be the ultimate guide to alleviating human suffering. Agreeing with this submission, Gordon (?) said that empathy sets the stage for caring and altruistic action. Since empathy leads to altruistic action, it implies that there is a connecting link between empathy and social entrepreneurship. The ability of the social entrepreneur to feel the pains and suffering of others would trigger the desire to capture the opportunity quickly by attenuating the situation through social entrepreneurship. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between social entrepreneurs' level of empathy and opportunity capturing

### **2.3 Societal Moral Obligation**

Moral obligation is 'a decision-making sub-process that occurs after an individual makes a moral judgment and prior to establishing a moral intention' (Haines, Street, & Haines, 2008). It is a metaphysical commitment, but in the long run, it is supposed to produce something physical, like action or change. From a religious perspective, Bryant (2009) defines moral obligation as the tendency of individuals to help each other by keeping themselves within religious limits. In the context of social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs that have moral obligation are fully committed to creative and innovative ideas and moral sense to pursue ideas that solve societal problems (Beugré, 2016).

Moral obligation is the key determinant that differentiates between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship (Roberts & Woods, 2000; Hendry, 2004). An individual with high moral values has an intention towards social entrepreneurship. An individual with social entrepreneurial intention has a sense of responsibility, duty and are motivated to serve the society.

Scholars such as De Groot and Steg (2009) and Stephan, Uhlaner, and Stride (2015) believe that strengthening moral obligations through increasing social awareness and responsibility can increase prosocial intentions and behaviour, which is consistent with the aim of social entrepreneurs in achieving prosocial goals

through starting up their ventures. Stevens, Moray, Bruneel and Clarysse (2015) found that social entrepreneurs' prosocial values correlate with a stronger emphasis on social goals for the organizations they lead. Stephan and Drencheva (2017) related social entrepreneurs' prosocial and openness to change values to the type and quality of ideas they generate in an innovation challenge. Moral obligation as an antecedent is very important for the social entrepreneur as it conveys the intention that addressing a particular social problem is the appropriate thing to do. Based on the above discussion we next propose the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant relationship between societal moral obligation and opportunity among social entrepreneurs

#### **2.4 Self-Efficacy**

Social entrepreneurial self-efficacy is regarded as 'a person's belief that individuals can contribute toward solving societal problems' (Hockerts, 2017). It is the ability to utilize the knowledge and skills that a person or organization possesses (optimism, self-confidence and control beliefs) to counter overconfidence or negativity to shocks in the external and internal environments, which also helps to improve entrepreneurial resilience.

In emerging economies like Nigeria, it is reasoned that self-efficacy could be associated with opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. This is because potential social entrepreneurs in emerging markets were reported to exhibit high self-efficacy, as it was associated with a higher level of innovativeness, social impact, expandability, and sustainability of the venture (Urban, 2015). Besides, Sequeira,

Mueller and McGee (2007) found that higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy is associated with a higher level of conviction and preparation for establishing a new venture, including higher self-confidence in addressing entrepreneurial tasks and higher engagement in writing a business plan or saving money for the business.

Theoretically, Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, which is rooted in social behavioral theory, validates a positive link between self-confidence and entrepreneurial outcome via the thoughts and behavior of the entrepreneur. McMullen and Shepherd (2006) emphasize that if the entrepreneur is pushed by his self-confidence to overcome his doubt beyond a potential cost envisaged, then the entrepreneur's actions will be actualized. Thus, the research hypothesized that:

H3: There is a significant relationship between social entrepreneurs' self-efficacy and opportunity capturing

#### **2.5 Social Support**

The social supports available to an entrepreneur depends on his/her social capital, which is seen as the actual and potential resources gained from being part of a social network (Mair & Noboa, 2006; Baron & Markman, 2000; Chia & Liang, 2016;). The connections entrepreneurs have to people of diverse backgrounds could help their new organisations capture valuable resources to enhance performance (Stam, Arzlanian, & Elfring, 2014).

Theoretically, it has been found that social network theory has a fundamental influence on the opportunity identification or recognition of social entrepreneurs (Musteen, Datta, & Butts, 2014; . Davidsson and Honig (2003), in a

comparative study of nascent entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, established that formal education (human capital), previous start-up experience, networks and memberships, and the ability to extract benefits from social structures (social capital) were strong predictors of those people who could identify a successful business opportunity.

Moreover, the types of social and business networks that entrepreneurs are associated to, including the strength of network ties, influence the types of new venture ideas that entrepreneurs recognize as well as the ability to exploit those opportunities (Davidsson & Honig 2003; Arenius & De Clercq 2005). Hence, persons who have large networks have greater chance to perceive opportunities compared to persons with smaller networks and rural networks (Arenius & De Clercq, 2005). It was therefore hypothesized that:

H4: There is a significant relationship between social entrepreneurs; perceived social support and opportunity capturing

## 2.6 Prior Experience

Prior experience as a concept in entrepreneurship is a vital concept in the study of entrepreneurship. Prior exposure to self-employment and entrepreneurial education can be an activator and a guide for potential entrepreneurs since such experiences nurture and encourage them to start up an enterprise (Keat, Selvarajah, & Meyer, 2011). Hence, prior experience with social problems is considered as people's practical experience in working with social-sector organisations, which can generate familiarity with such types of social problems (Hockerts, 2017). This includes personal experience with a

social need, such as experience of a traumatic event, lack of care for own elderly parent, visit to impoverished areas in childhood, etc (Wong & Tang, 2006; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016). Such experiences may assist social entrepreneurs to recognize what works and what does not work before engaging in a new venture, identify role models, and develop confidence in establishing an enterprise (Shumate, Atouba, Cooper, & Pilny, 2014).

A number of studies have shown that there is connection between prior experience and entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Khuong and An (2016) shows a positive relationship between prior entrepreneurial experiences and entrepreneurial intentions, indicating how entrepreneurship training and education might shape students' future professions. In terms of social entrepreneurship, studies by Ruskin, et al (2016) indicates that personal experiences influence prosocial and self-interested, extrinsic motivations to set up a social enterprise. They stressed that the repeated experience of self- or others-oriented emotions (e.g., passion and frustration or empathy and sympathy) acts as precursor to developing self- and others-regarding entrepreneurial motives. Therefore, it was hypothesized thus:

H5: There is a significant relationship between social entrepreneurs' prior experience and opportunity capturing.

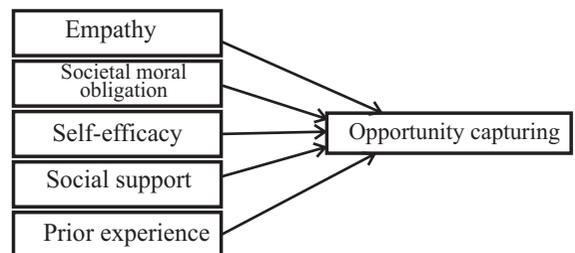


Figure1. Conceptual Model

### 3.0 Methodology

#### Population and sample

This study is a hypothesis testing research where a cross sectional survey was employed using twenty-seven (27) Non-Governmental Organisations in Jos. The owners and employees of the NGOs constituted the unit of analysis who were two hundred and ninety-six (296) in total. The figures were collected from the Admin Officers of the various NGOs. Since the total population is not large, census study was applied. Jos metropolis was chosen because of the concentration of NGOs. Not all the administered questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents. Some of the respondents lost the questionnaires, some failed to fill it, and others were away on field assignments when the researchers came to retrieve the questionnaires. Therefore, the total number of valid questionnaires was two hundred and seventy-three (273), representing a response rate of 92%.

#### Procedure

The study used simple random sampling technique, where individual respondents were randomly drawn. The data were collected through a personal approach. The data collection approach was chosen because of the nature of the limited availability and inefficiency of postal and communication services in Nigeria is unfavorable for questionnaires to be mailed to our respondents. Participation was voluntary, and anonymity was guaranteed.

#### Measures

To guarantee reliable and valid measurement, scales from prior studies were adopted. Concerning the antecedents of social

entrepreneurship, the study results of Hockert (2017) were referred to. A total of 23 questions were adopted as survey questions for measuring the concepts of empathy, societal moral obligation, self-efficacy, social support, and prior experience. In addition, Opportunity Capturing was measured using scales developed by Ozgen and Baron (2007). The respondents answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Unanswered questions were treated as missing values.

#### Common Method Variance

The Common Method Variance (CMV) for this study was determine through the Correlation Matrix Procedure. Bagozzi, Yi and Philips (1991) have described the method of assessing the impact of CMV through latent variables' correlations. The common method bias will be evident when a substantially large correlation is found among principal construct ( $r > 0.9$ ). However, CMV will not be an issue in any study if the correlation among constructs is less than 0.9 (Bagozzi, et al, 1991). The CMV for this study was observed through the correlation matrix in table IV. The correlation among all the variables was found to be less than 0.9. Hence, CMV is not an issue in this study.

#### Respondents Profile

The sample characteristics reveal that females were more (61.5%) than males (38.5), with the majority belonging to the 31– 40 age bracket (46.2%). Also, majority of the respondents (53.8%) were married and most of them (53.8%) were graduates (HND/B.SC.)

**Table I: Demographic Distribution of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	105	38.5
Female	168	61.5
Total	273	100.0
<b>Age Range</b>		
20-30 Years	105	38.5
31-40 Years	126	46.2
41-50 Years	42	15.4
Total	273	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	126	46.2
Married	147	53.8
Total	273	100.0
<b>Qualification</b>		
School Leaving Certificate	21	7.7
SSCE	21	7.7
HND/B.SC	147	53.8
Others	84	30.8
Total	273	100.0

#### 4.0 Data Analysis

To evaluate our measurement model, convergent and discriminant validity were assessed. Convergent validity measures the degree to which multiple indicators evaluating the same concept agree (Henseler et al., 2016). This was achieved by examining the factor loading and

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each indicator. The results presented in Table II shows that loading for all items surpassed the recommended value of 0.5 (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017), therefore the criterion is not violated.

Meanwhile some items (EMP2, EMP4, EMP6, SMO2, SEF3, and SSP4) were removed from the empathy, societal moral obligation, self-

efficacy and social support due to low factor loading.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's (1954) Test of Sphericity was calculated to ascertain whether the questionnaire items yield unique and reliable factors. For the independent variable, the results show that Empathy has KMO = 0.708, Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 712.052 and Total Variance Explained = 51.007%; Societal Moral Obligation has KMO = 0.752, Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 712.052 and Total Variance

Table II: Exploratory Factor Analysis Indicating Factor Loading, AVE and Reliability Results

Variables	Factor Loading	AVE	Reliability
EMP1	.816		
EMP3	.933		
EMP5	.898	0.781	.726
SMO1	.838		
SMO3	.795		
SMO4	.634	0.579	.792
SEF1	.927		
SEF2	.530		
SEF4	.880	0.638	.811
SSP1	.797		
SSP2	.698		
SSP3	.619	0.502	.702
PEX1	.753		
PEX2	.629		
PEX3	.837	0.554	.763
OCP1	.799		
OCP2	.799	0.638	.797

Note: EMP2, EMP4, EMP6, SMO2, SEF3, and SSP4 were deleted for low factor loading

Explained = 59.553%; Self-Efficacy has KMO = 0.859, Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 1237.12 and Total Variance Explained = 54.746%; Social

Support has KMO = 0.874, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 983.586 and Total Variance Explained = 68.176%; and Prior Experience has KMO = 0.719, Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 263.632 and Total Variance Explained = 66.875%. For the dependent variable, the results indicate that KMO = 0.802, Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 1880.435 and Total Variance Explained = 63.832%.

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was calculated to ascertain the internal consistency of the scales of the variables. The results indicate that the standard Cronbach's coefficient for all the

scales were found to be above 0.7 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) (Empathy  $\alpha$  = .726; Societal Moral Obligation  $\alpha$  = .792; Self-Efficacy  $\alpha$  = .811; Social Support  $\alpha$  = .702; Prior Experience  $\alpha$  = .763 and Opportunity Capturing  $\alpha$  = 0.797).

To assess discriminant validity, the squared correlations among constructs were compared with the respective Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria was used which suggests that if the squared correlation values among the latent are less than the AVE, it is an indication of discriminant validity. The results in Table III indicate that all squared correlations were greater than the AVE, which means that the concepts studied were different.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the contribution effects of antecedent of empathy, social moral obligation, self-efficacy, social support and prior experience on opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship.

**Table III: Discriminant Validity**

	<b>EMP</b>	<b>SMO</b>	<b>SEF</b>	<b>SSP</b>	<b>PEX</b>	<b>OCP</b>
EMP	<b>.781</b>					
SMO	.076**	<b>.579</b>				
SEF	.000	.494**	<b>.638</b>			
SSP	.081**	.044**	.000	<b>.502</b>		
PEX	.473**	.551**	.166**	.037**	<b>.554</b>	
OCP	.019*	.035**	.106**	.015	.209**	<b>.638</b>

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in table IV showed a significant association among the study variables. (Empathy and Opportunity Capturing  $r = .138$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; Societal Moral Obligation and Opportunity Capturing  $r = .188$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ; Self-Efficacy and Opportunity Capturing  $r = .326$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ; Social Support and Opportunity Capturing  $r = .123$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; Prior Experience and Opportunity Capturing  $r = .475$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The regression results indicate an R<sup>2</sup> value of 60.2 which means that 60.2% variation in Opportunity Capturing in Social Entrepreneurship could be explained by Empathy, Societal Moral Obligation, Self-Efficacy, Social Support and Prior Experience.

**Table V: Result of Path Coefficient**

Hypotheses	Relationship	Std Beta	t - stat	Sig. Value	Decision	VIF
H1	EMP → OCP	-.647	-10.102	.000	Supported	2.749
H2	SMO → OCP	-1.194	-14.320	.000	Supported	4.665
H3	SEF → OCP	.529	9.204	.000	Supported	2.214
H4	SSP → OCP	.133	3.156	.002	Supported	1.185
H5	PEX → OCP	1.566	17.599	.000	supported	5.310

Notes: EMP, Empathy; SMO, Societal Moral Obligation; SEF, Self-Efficacy; SSP, Social Support; PEX, Prior Experience and OCP, Opportunity Capturing

Results of path analysis in line with hypothesized relationships were evaluated in Table V. Findings reveal that: (H1) the relationship that links empathy and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship yielded a  $\beta = -.647$ ,  $t$ -value = -10.102, sig. value = .000. This signifies that the hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between empathy and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship is supported, but not statistically significant since the relationship is negative. That is, for every one standard deviation increase in empathy, opportunity capturing decrease by a standard deviation of -.647. (H2) The relationship connecting societal moral obligation and opportunity capturing shows  $\beta = -1.194$ ,  $t$ -value = -14.320, sig. value = .000. This means that the hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between societal moral obligation

and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship is supported, however, it is equally a negative relationship because for every one standard deviation increase in social moral obligation, opportunity capturing decrease by a standard deviation of -1.194. (H3). The link between self-efficacy and opportunity capturing revealed  $\beta = .529$ ,  $t$ -value = 9.204, sig. value = .000. The hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship is strongly supported, since the difference is statistically significant. For every one standard deviation in self-efficacy, there is a positive increase in opportunity capturing by a standard deviation of .529. (H4) The connection between social support and opportunity capturing yield a  $\beta = .133$ ,  $t$ -value = 3.156, sig. value = .002. The hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between social support and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship is supported. The difference is statistically significant. For every one standard deviation increase in social support, there is a

positive increase in opportunity capturing by a standard deviation of .133. (H5) The link between prior experience and opportunity capturing reveals a  $\beta = 1.566$ ,  $t\text{-value} = 17.599$ ,  $\text{sig. value} = .000$ . It is statistically significant. This means that the hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between prior experience and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship is supported. For every one standard deviation in prior experience, opportunity capturing would increase by a standard deviation of 1.566.

What these results revealed is that there is a significant relationship between social entrepreneurship and opportunity capturing. However, empathy and social moral obligation as characteristics of social entrepreneurship have negative relationship with opportunity capturing. While characteristics such as, self-efficacy, social support and prior experience have strong positive relationship with opportunity-capture.

## 5.0 Discussion of Findings

This article examined the concept of opportunity capturing from the social entrepreneurial perspectives, using employees and owners of Non-governmental Organisations as unit of analysis. The study established the relationship between the antecedents of social entrepreneurship (empathy, societal moral obligation, self-efficacy and prior experience) and opportunity capturing. Drawing from the results obtained in the hypothesized relationships, it was discovered that empathy has a significant relationship with opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, this relationship is a negative one,

which suggests an inverse relationship. What this means is that the more empathic an entrepreneur is, the less able s/he can capture social entrepreneurial opportunities. This finding is at variance with Ruskin, Seymour, and Webster (2016) who found that emotions associated with a prosocial personality, such as empathy, sympathy, and compassion, do propel individuals to pursue social entrepreneurial opportunities.

It was also found that even though there is a significant relationship between the feeling of societal moral obligation and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship, this relationship was equally found to be a negative one. This suggests that the more an entrepreneur has moral obligation to help others who are less privileged, the lesser the likelihood to act and exploit such an opportunity. This finding is also at variance with Tiwari et al (2017) who found that moral obligation as an antecedent is very important for the social entrepreneur as it conveys the intention that addressing a particular social problem is the appropriate thing to do .

It was further discovered that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. This implies that when social entrepreneurs do not doubt their capabilities and competencies in solving social ills in society it helps in capturing social entrepreneurial opportunity. This agrees with Mair and Noboa (2006) who reported that a high level of self-efficacy allows a person to perceive the creation of a social venture as feasible, which positively affects the formation of the corresponding behavioral intention.

The paper also revealed that there is a significant relationship between social support and opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. This means that the social capital an entrepreneur has could actually help in capturing opportunity, especially in social entrepreneurship. This agrees with Davidsson and Honig (2003), who in a comparative study of nascent entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, established that formal education (human capital), previous start-up experience, networks and memberships, and the ability to extract benefits from social structures (social capital) were strong predictors of those people who could identify a successful business opportunity. The findings also agree with that religious networks could serve as valuable support capable of enhancing discovery of business opportunities to potential entrepreneurs. Therefore, religious groups that form networks have impact on social entrepreneurship, which will in turn push the success of entrepreneurs. It also agrees with Tassang, Muhideen, Ashu, Abosi, and Yuzhen (2019) who found that managerial ties as important social capital has an influence on opportunity capture.

It was further established that there is a significant relationship between prior experience and opportunity capture in social entrepreneurship. This agrees with Hockerts (2017) who found that prior work experience with social organizations are important antecedents to predict an individual's intention to engage in social entrepreneurship. Ruskin, et al (2016) indicates that personal experiences influence prosocial and self-interested, extrinsic motivations to set up a social enterprise. They stressed that the repeated experience of self- or other-oriented emotions (e.g., passion and

frustration or empathy and sympathy) acts as precursor to developing self- and other-regarding entrepreneurial motives. It is argued that since personal experience influences prosocial motivation to set up a social enterprise it could equally influence opportunity capture in social entrepreneurship.

## **Implications of Findings**

### **Theoretical Implication**

From the theoretical lens, the findings of the study have enhanced our understanding of opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship through the positive theory of social entrepreneurship. The positive theory of social entrepreneurship posits that individuals who place a strong weight on others-interest will tend to associate together in the context of organisation focused on value creation. The research has shown that not all the antecedents of a social entrepreneur is positively related to opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. Characteristics such as empathy, and societal moral obligations had inverse relationship with opportunity capturing while self-efficacy, social support and prior experience actually help the social entrepreneur to pursue and respond to given social issues/problems opportunities quickly and utilizing them to achieve better firm growth. This suggests that self-efficacy, social support and prior experience are more critical to opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship. There is a strong need to reconsider the role of empathy and societal moral obligation in capturing social entrepreneurial opportunities.

## Managerial Implication

The managerial implication of this study is that social entrepreneurs and managers of social organizations should leverage on self-efficacy, social support and prior experience to capture opportunities that attenuate human sufferings. Self-efficacy permits a person to perceive an opportunity as feasible and would move to quickly capture it. Moreover, social support has become vital for finishing different tasks; whether they are trivial or enormous such as opportunity capturing. This goes to show that no one can succeed in opportunity capturing without others' help. Also, prior experience enables the generation of awareness and knowledge of the social aspects for opportunity development of social entrepreneurship (Corner & Ho, 2010).

Therefore, organizations that are social in nature should ensure that its workforce is strictly composed of employees that have self-efficacy, social support and prior experience. These qualities will help the manager as well as the organization to capture opportunities bothered on improving the lot of society. Doing otherwise could make their work difficult.

### Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

The limitation of this study is the fact that the study used both owners and employees in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) as unit of analysis of the study. It is possible that some of the employees working in the NGOs are not social entrepreneurially incline. They are there to make a living for themselves as a priority rather than serve others interest first. Equally, some of the NGOs that participated in the study are faith-based organisations. This means that the owners

do not possess natural personality, rather, they possess legal or artificial personality and may not possess the antecedents of a natural person or social entrepreneur. It is not clear whether the antecedents of these different personalities influences opportunity capture differently.

The study suggests that future studies should research owners and employees as separate unit of analysis to see if the outcome would be the same. This could enrich the literature on opportunity capture from the social entrepreneurial perspective. Moreover, scholars could study opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurial firms own by organisations and in social entrepreneurial organisations own by individuals to see if the outcomes would be any different. This would greatly enrich the understanding of opportunity capturing in social entrepreneurship.

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