

Passionate Leaders in Social Entrepreneurship: Exploring an African Context

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Abstract

Nonstate actors such as social enterprises are increasingly influential for addressing pressing social needs in sub-Saharan Africa. Moving responsibility from the state to private entrepreneurs calls for a greater understanding of how single individuals achieve their social mission in a context characterized by acute poverty and where informal institutions, such as trust and collective norms, are strong governance mechanisms. This study recognizes the role of leader passion as a key element for gaining people's trust in the social enterprise leader and the social mission. Qualitative data were collected on 37 leaders of Nigerian social enterprises in arenas such as health, women's rights, children's rights, AIDS/HIV care and education, and sustainable development. Drawing on 100 semistructured interviews, the authors develop an inductive model illustrating how leader passion interrelates with the social enterprise organizing and outcomes.

Keywords

social entrepreneurship, sub-Saharan Africa, passion, leadership, qualitative orientation

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Among the efforts to mitigate poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, establishing social enterprises and involving nonstate actors has gained increasing popularity (Nega & Schneider, 2014). Shifting the responsibility for reducing poverty from the state to private actors bears several complex issues. The present study acknowledges that significant pressure shifts to single individuals to become the engines for social change. As a consequence of this phenomenon, a greater understanding of how single leaders successfully make an impact is imperative.

In studying social enterprises in sub-Saharan Africa, Rivera-Santos, Holt, Littlewood, and Kolk (2015) identified how contextual dimensions such as acute poverty, informality, colonial history, and ethnic group identity influence the focus of activities and self-perceptions of social ventures. Their research demonstrates how the environment affects social enterprising and depicts the challenging conditions that social enterprise leaders face in this region. According to the World Bank (2015b), 46.8% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa subsists at the poverty level, defined as living on US\$1.25 a day (compared with Latin America and the Caribbean at 4.6%, East Asia and Pacific at 7.9%, and South Asia at 24.5%). Furthermore, it is the only region in the world in which the number of people falling into poverty is increasing; indeed, in 2010, 411.3 million people lived in poverty and in 2011 this figure had risen to 414.4 (World Bank, 2015b). Thorbecke (2013) suggested that the combination of acute poverty, inequality, and low growth has hindered the region's capacity to reduce poverty.

These extreme conditions in sub-Saharan Africa impose challenges for the leaders of social enterprises. With the serious nature of the region's social issues and little support from governments, the success of a social enterprise depends on how well the social leader manages specific contextual conditions. Such acute poverty typically requires that the organization's members develop activities in dialogue with the target population (those whom the enterprise seeks to help; Rivera-Santos et al., 2015). In particular, this includes evaluating the extent to which the population trusts the social enterprise leader and feels it identifies with him or her through shared cognitions, morals, and emotions. In practice, building trust and close relationships with local people is essential for achieving an intended mission (Simanis & Hart, 2008).

Moreover, the sub-Saharan region's informal economy (e.g., mutual self-help and street trading) characterizes most of the population's livelihood (Aryeetey, 2009). Consequently, people are more accustomed to mechanisms that govern the informal economy, such as conforming to shared norms, beliefs, and values (Webb, Tihanyi, Ireland, & Sirmon, 2009), than relying on formal markets. To achieve a social mission successfully, therefore, both the targeted people and the organization's members must be motivated to support

the enterprise's activities. In the absence of formal support apparatuses, much hinges on the social enterprise leader to stimulate such motivation.

Given these contextual conditions, understanding single leaders' potential avenues for impact includes understanding how to organize the social enterprise and motivate both the organization's members and targeted people to have faith in him or her *as a person* and in the social mission. Many factors may contribute to developing such faith; indeed, the present study focuses on one: the leader's passion.

Sarah Harris, founder of Incite (a company that forges corporate–community alliances and develops partnerships to market social initiatives), stated that “what makes social entrepreneurship work is that people are passionate about solving social problems” (Plaskoff, 2012, p. 434). Passion¹ is mentioned typically as a personal resource for turning visions into action (Luh & Lu, 2012; Rip, Vallerand, & Lafreniere, 2012). The present study aims to take this notion one step further by exploring how leaders' passion may play a role in social enterprises in sub-Saharan Africa.

To address this aim, the authors use data on 37 social enterprise leaders in Nigeria. The article begins with a theoretical background, which is followed by a presentation of the inductive method employed. Thereafter, the authors present the findings, which are qualitatively modeled around how leader passion is interrelated with the organizational power of the social enterprise, the created social value, and the salience of the social enterprise engagement for the leader's self-identity. The article concludes with a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical Background

Social Entrepreneurship

Social enterprises operate worldwide, and scholarly interest in understanding what they are, how they work, and their impact on social wealth is increasing (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006; Mair & Marti, 2006; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). As is characteristic for nascent research fields, several parallel conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship exist, but a unified definition is yet to be established (Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Santos, 2012; Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009). An overall understanding, however, is that a social enterprise centers around a social mission, with profits reinvested into that particular social mission. Research has elaborated on the concepts of both social entrepreneurship itself and the social entrepreneur (Austin et al., 2006; Mair & Marti, 2006; Peredo & McLean, 2006). Lumpkin, Moss, Gras, Kato, and Amezcua (2013) defined

social entrepreneurship as “a social value creation process in which resources are combined in new ways to meet social needs, stimulate social change, or create new organizations” (p. 762). Santos (2012) posited that an important distinction exists when conceptualizing social versus commercial entrepreneurship. He stressed that commercial entrepreneurs seek to capture value for their own organization and its stakeholders, whereas social entrepreneurs work to create value that increases aggregate social utility.

Similar to creating commercial enterprises, creating social enterprises occurs in several stages. Drawing on qualitative data on social enterprises, Haugh (2007, p. 170) outlined the following six stages: (a) opportunity identification, (b) idea articulation, (c) idea ownership, (d) stakeholder mobilization, (e) opportunity exploitation, and (f) stakeholder reflection. Åslund and Bäckström’s (2012) study supported this view and illustrated how social entrepreneurs become responsible for the entire process. It is their responsibility to gather information, seek ways to solve identified social problems, and mobilize several kinds of resources to build the organization they envision. Mair, Battilana, and Cardenas (2012) described the same mechanisms, stressing the “domain,” “targets,” and “activities” in this process (p. 355).

Mair and colleagues (2012) also highlighted that social entrepreneurs must justify their course of action when interacting with others; indeed, this allows them to leverage social, economic, human, and political capital. This is consistent with Partzsch and Ziegler (2011), who found that social entrepreneurs build the social enterprise’s legitimacy and authority by being locally embedded, engaging in educational efforts, and using personal problem-solving capacity.

Corner and Ho (2010) asserted that one cannot fully understand the phenomenon of social enterprising if one does not recognize the important interactions social entrepreneurs must have with others to identify and develop opportunities. Similarly, Alford, Brown, and Letts (2004) found that a key success factor to producing social change is that the entrepreneur becomes involved in innovative activities. The characteristics of such initiatives include building local capacity, mobilizing resources to solve common problems, and collaborating with local movements to form synergies with other powerful actors. Sen (2007) further argued that social entrepreneurs can contribute to sustainable social change if they are creative in providing radical new solutions to social problems and if they have committed to a vision and are determined to change an entire social system.

Considering the individual’s importance to the success of social enterprises, several researchers have developed a portrait of the social entrepreneur. Most prevalent is that social entrepreneurs are people who have a clear and precise mission to create social value (Austin et al., 2006) that guides

their strategy. The importance attributed to the enterprise's social mission will determine the zeal and drive the social entrepreneur expends to succeed (Witkamp, Royakkers, & Raven, 2011). In fact, Sharir and Lerner (2006) showed that the social entrepreneur's "total dedication to promoting the venture" was the second-most important success factor for social ventures after "venture social network" and even ranking higher than factors such as available capital and public acceptance (p. 10).

Taking a closer look at the individual behind social enterprises, exploratory studies have shown that social entrepreneurs have a quality similar to altruism and score high on self-direction, entrepreneurship orientation, and empathy (Bargsted, Picon, Salazar, & Rojas, 2013). Social entrepreneurs can also motivate and convince others to be committed to a cause and a shared purpose, while also building essential networks to secure resources, which work together to solve social problems (Barendsen & Gardner, 2004; Thompson, 2002).

This brief review of research regarding leaders of social enterprises paints a portrait of the social entrepreneur that highlights dedication, vision, and social networking. Beyond these qualities, however, research is lacking into how the social entrepreneurs' feelings for what they do may be important to the processes and outcomes of the social enterprise.

Leader Passion

Passion is defined as "consciously accessible, intense positive feelings experienced by engagement in entrepreneurial activities associated with roles that are meaningful and salient to the self-identity of the entrepreneur" (Cardon, Wincent, Singh, & Drnovsek, 2009, p. 517). Passionate leaders have some similarities to transformational and charismatic leadership, which also relate to values and emotions (Yukl, 1999). Transformational leadership focuses on how the leader shares a vision and motivates followers to take an interest in the task and its outcomes. Furthermore, it addresses how such interest may turn into follower identification, trust, and loyalty toward the leader (Bass, 1990). Some overlap between transformational and charismatic leadership exists, but scholars who distinguish the two concepts typically stress that the charismatic leader has extraordinary abilities that followers admire. This does not necessarily, however, motivate followers to take a greater interest in organizational tasks (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996).

Passion is unique in that it is founded on identity salience and may thus explain something over and beyond transformational and charismatic leadership. The growing literature on passion, however, has not given much insight into passionate leaders. Rather, passion research consists of a comprehensive

body of studies showing its association to individual-level outcomes such as psychological well-being (Carpentier, Mageau, & Vallerand, 2012) and how it affects the quality of interpersonal relationships (Philippe, Vallerand, Houliort, Lavigne, & Donahue, 2010). In an organizational setting, researchers have theorized that entrepreneurs' passion may result in employee passion (Cardon, 2008), have empirically studied how entrepreneurs' passion may be positive for employees' affective commitment (Breugst, Domurath, Patzelt, & Klaukien, 2012), and have shown how passion may be interrelated with role stressors (Thorgren & Wincent, 2013). Few studies, however, have investigated leaders' passion. Ho and Pollack (2014) examined how small business managers' passion was associated with their interactions with others in business networks, whereas Klaukien, Shepherd, and Patzelt (2013) examined its impact on the decision to exploit new product opportunities. Omored, Thorgren, and Wincent (2013) focused on passion's impact on goal attainment. None of these quantitative studies, however, provide a greater understanding into the role passion plays for leadership and the organization.

In sum, the social entrepreneurship literature has not focused much attention to how leaders feel toward the social enterprise, and the passion literature has provided only a nascent understanding of the role leaders' passion may play for the organization. By exploring how leaders' passion plays a role in social enterprises, the present study addresses these gaps.

Method

Research Setting

The present study draws on qualitative methods (Edmondson & McManus, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to inductively gain a greater understanding of how leaders' passion may play a role in social enterprises in sub-Saharan Africa. The sample included 37 individuals leading nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Nigeria. Nigeria is Africa's most densely populated country with 178.5 million inhabitants (World Bank, 2015a), with 15.2% of the population aged younger than 15 years (Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Social needs are very high. Diseases such as HIV and malaria are rampant, the country has a high mortality rate among children and low life expectancy, and a large portion of the population does not have access to basic needs such as electricity, improved toilet facilities, and water sources.

Approximately, 46,000 NGOs are registered in Nigeria (Nigeria: Over 46,000, 2009). These organizations focus on various issues, with common concerns being providing water to communities, social amenities and infrastructures, support for health-related issues such as tuberculosis and HIV/

AIDs, advocating for human rights, advocating against sexual abuse and child molestation, and providing individuals with micro financing to set up small-scale businesses. Most NGOs focus on a specific region or subset of the public (e.g., persons with HIV/AIDS in a small, rural community). Registering an NGO is only possible if it is associated with religion, education, literacy, science, social development, sporting, or a charitable purpose (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, 2013).

While researchers have not agreed fully on what an NGO is, there is consensus on what it is not: It is not dependent on the government but still not a private, for-profit organization (Yaziji & Doh, 2009). A United Nations' (2015) website describing NGOs defined them as

task-oriented and made up of people with a common interest, . . . perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring public concerns to governments, monitor policy and programme implementation, and encourage participation of civil society stakeholders at the community level.

A critical debate emerged following the growth of African NGOs regarding to what extent the NGOs are truly developmental for Africa and actually improve the quality of life. Indeed, some have questioned whether NGOs reinforce recolonization as the "new compradors" that create dependence rather than independence among disadvantaged people (Hearn, 2007, p. 1097). Undoubtedly, a wide spectrum of NGOs operate in Africa, from those that run the organization like a business and earn private benefits to those that run the organization to solve social problems. Given this range, all NGOs cannot be equated with social enterprises.

The NGOs sampled in the present study, however, all refer to the latter side of the spectrum. Using the typology suggested by Yaziji and Doh (2009), they are in an NGO category in which other than the NGO members are beneficiaries and the activities are service oriented rather than advocacy oriented. Comparing the present study's sample and how social entrepreneurship is conceptualized in the literature (Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Dacin et al., 2011; Zahra et al., 2009) supports the notion that the sampled NGOs are a type of nonprofit social enterprises.

As described in the appendix, the organizations address social issues such as health, women's rights, children's rights, AIDS/HIV care and education, and sustainable development. Moreover, social mission is each organization's primary goal. If they generate a profit, it is invested in the social mission; no profit is distributed among shareholders. A close examination even suggests that most of them resemble Zahra et al.'s (2009) social constructionist type of social entrepreneurship in that they "build and operate alternative

structures to provide goods and services addressing social needs that governments, agencies, and businesses cannot”; they are “small to large scale, local to international in scope, designed to be institutionalized to address an ongoing social need”; and “professional volunteers and employees are needed to operate organization” (p. 523). Building health centers to deal with diseases such as malaria and HIV is a typical example of how an NGO tries to institutionalize services around ongoing social needs that the government cannot address.

Sampling

The present research project started on a small scale using public directories and websites (e.g., Nigeria network of NGOs [<http://nnngo.org/content/ngo-list>] and Nigeria Galleria [<http://nnngo.org/content/ngo-list>]) to identify the leaders of NGOs. Contact information was available for 46 leaders; of these, 7 agreed to participate in the initial study. At this early point, the study focused on exploring the reasons behind the leaders’ motivation to start social enterprises and their persistence in the entrepreneurial process. After noticing that qualities and behaviors among the leaders overlapped significantly with the definition of passion, the research group decided that this was a promising path to follow. The authors therefore expanded data collection to delve deeper into those issues.

One of the authors subsequently traveled around Nigeria to meet with people leading NGOs and establish first contact. This effort created relationships with 30 additional leaders who agreed to participate in the next phase of the study, resulting in a final sample featuring 37 leaders (7 women, 30 men) .

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data used for the present study were transcripts from 100 interviews. Each of the 37 leaders was interviewed once (for a duration of between 30 and 85 min) during one of two periods: January through March 2012 (the first 7 leaders) or January through May 2013 (the remaining 30 leaders). The interviews were semistructured; they not only employed a standard set of open-ended questions² but also allowed for flexibility in capturing the informants’ stories and accounting for the study’s exploratory design. Interviews with the first 7 informants captured why each leader started and maintained his or her NGO, whereas the remaining 30 interviews went into greater detail on the steps taken to create the enterprise (e.g., generating ideas or mobilizing resources), as well as delving into the NGO’s impact on society.

To gain richer insight and validate the data collected from the social enterprise leaders, data were also collected from the people surrounding the leaders. These data addressed how colleagues perceived and viewed their leader. After each interview, therefore, the leader was asked to provide contact information for other interview candidates. Of the 37 leaders, 24 provided referrals. In total, data were collected from 63 people surrounding 22 of the interviewed leaders. The referrals were mainly social enterprise workers, people among the organization's trustees, as well as family and friends. As the appendix shows, the referrals' perspectives are categorized into reflections on (a) the social enterprise and its activities, (b) the leader's role and behavior, and (c) the leader's motivation and inclinations. Interviews with referrals lasted from 5 to 80 min, with much depending on how close each was to the leader and how long they had known each other. All interviews were conducted in English, recorded, and transcribed verbatim.³

Data were analyzed by centering primarily on each leader as a case. Typically, the interview data from the leaders were richer and more extensive than the data from referrals; therefore, they contributed more substantively to the present study's findings. The referral data, however, were useful to validate the leaders' data. In general, the analysis progressed through four phases; however, it also developed through an iterative process rather than following a strict sequence. The analysis started with open coding (Locke, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), breaking the data into pieces by associating words and sentences with codes (e.g., "resources," "assistance," "impact"). Next, the open coding was used for axial coding, that is, conceptually similar codes were grouped into more abstract constructs. For example, a second-order construct of "awareness raising" was induced, which consolidated references related to how the leader sheds light on injustices and counterproductive beliefs within the community. Finally, dimensions underlying the second-order constructs were identified through axial coding ("organizational power," "social value creation," and "self-identity salience"). Figure 1 illustrates the data structure that resulted from this analytical process.

In the fourth and final phase of data analysis, the present study examined how the dimensions and their associated constructs might relate to each other. This developed into a conceptual framework and model aimed at providing insights into how leader passion may play a role for social enterprising.

Findings

The data revealed that leaders who are passionate about engaging in a social enterprise and have internalized social enterprising as part of who they are can spread that passion to the organization. This, consequently, can be a useful resource for building organizational power. A powerful organization, in

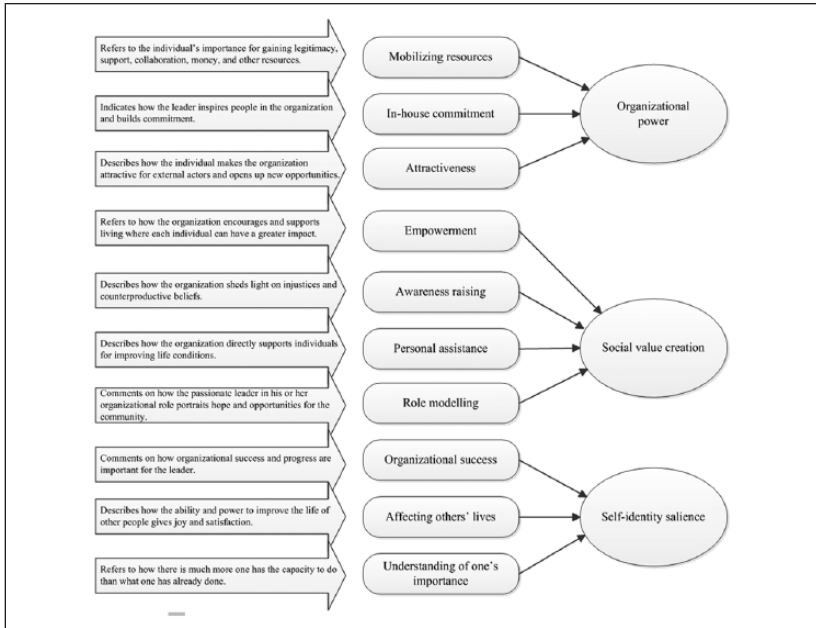


Figure 1. The data structure.

turn, enables the social enterprise to make positive changes in the community. It does so by empowering people, raising awareness, personal assistance, and providing role modeling. Both building organizational power and creating social value may contribute to making the social enterprise engagement more salient for the leader's identity. This, in turn, releases even more of the positive feelings that characterize passion.

Organizational Power

The data suggest that the leaders are important for their organizations' existence and everything the organizations represent. In particular, the leading individual's passion may create organizational benefits by leading to three outcomes that strengthen the organizational power of the social enterprise: (a) mobilizing resources, (b) generating in-house commitment, and (c) being perceived as attractive.

Mobilizing resources. Mobilizing resources is the process whereby the leader identifies and accesses resources essential to create, develop, and maintain

the goals established for the organization. Such resources may vary from human capital to financial holdings depending on the mission. For leaders to execute their social mission, they must first obtain resources, such as consistently gathering information from various sources. The data reveal that the leaders' emphasis on how to gather resources fostered their creativity in identifying and exploiting social opportunities. For example, discovering what the society or community really needs—such as “child and maternal health”—involves developing knowledge and skills and motivating others to join efforts to address the social cause.

More specifically, the leaders started to build their networks through informal social ties (e.g., family and friends) and then moved to their formal ties (e.g., donor agencies). This allowed them to harness not only internal resources, such as services offered, infrastructure, and personal capabilities, but also gave them access to external resources such as technology and extrinsic knowledge. Leader 5 noted,

I made use of my contacts; I mobilized local people through email, SMS, text messages, and the social network. A lot of people I got through Facebook, a lot of people I got through LinkedIn, because there are some people that I already lost contact with, and when they saw the activities, the activities on the Facebook, they started supporting us. Some people volunteered . . . people began to develop us; some people donated money and some people donated ideas.

Beyond mobilizing resources to seize opportunities, the leaders needed to penetrate community barriers by focusing on helping people understand the meanings and motives behind their ideas and dedication to their mission. Because resources are needed to support social initiatives and require some form of organizing, the leaders spent time mobilizing individuals who did not just acknowledge a particular cause but also those who believed deeply in what they were doing and who had similar prosocial motives (Miller, Grimes, McMullen, & Vogus, 2012). For example, prior to starting their organization, the leaders began to develop their relational resources (social capital and social skills), including activating social interactions, connecting with established networks of formal and informal ties, and accessing communication channels (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010). In doing so, they tapped into opportunities to gather the maximum wealth of skills from others by exchanging information and leveraging interpersonal relationships. Leader 29 expressed this notion:

Before registration I had to call a friend, a very good friend, in a community. I said to him, you know, the need to reach out to the less privileged in the rural communities. So, he bought the idea. Like I keep saying, you are a Nigerian. If

you work with the rural areas, you find out that people are living under abject poverty; nobody cares for them. Anything given to the community by the government is hijacked by the politicians that are supposed to be representing them. So, it's only in the NGO world that you can penetrate and directly deal with the people. Yes. So after agreeing with me, and he bought the idea, he gave me all the support . . .

Successfully gathering the greatest amount of skills and knowledge was an added advantage; indeed, it advanced the enterprises' abilities to enhance and maintain relationships with several partners. For example, some leaders built relationships with individuals, other social enterprises, churches (within and beyond the communities they were developing), government bodies, and donor agencies. This was a strategy they maintained to leverage individuals from diverse fields to build a stronger social network. In other words, they created an effective platform for creating social value and solving social issues. Leader 8 noted,

We are all on [the] ground in Nigeria, and we know what is happening in Nigeria, so if they buy the idea you have no problem. They will rub minds, bring out ideas, try to find out better ways to do things . . . I spoke with . . . a journalist mentor, a biographer, that is Mr. [Name], that is the executive director of the biographer, then I spoke with . . . even the parties of the organization, my friends, Mr. [Name] . . . So, I shared the idea with them and they bought it, they are ready, they gave me the go ahead for collaboration and partnership, and I think . . . those are the people I shared my vision with.

With relational resources both within and beyond their communities, the leaders found that being passionate about achieving sustainable social impact helped them identify other ways to leverage potential resources for productive outcomes. For example, Leader 22, who was working to build a platform for peace, harnessed resources using his personal contacts. He said,

In the Ebvutubu community, when we finished the first bit of the project, we reported to them [community elders and the council meeting chairman] and explained to them, and they welcomed it to continue. So, we had to look for partners and luckily we were able to get partners that funded the continuation of the project but did not fully include the Ebvutubu community. Because of the contact, communication, and commitment [with the community elders and the council meeting chairman], we were able to ensure that the next stage included the community.

This statement also indicates that at every stage of building and operating the organization, the leader must show others that it is important to cultivate

several resources simultaneously and to do so continually. The organization then accesses those resources to become stronger. For example, Leader 28 is committed to helping people with disabilities. As he emphasizes in the following quote, several people gave him expert advice and professional support to drive and build his organizational processes:

At every point in time when we discovered people who are specialist in [an] area, we will call their attention. They always see it as a means to give their time to work for us.

This statement expresses that the leaders made extra effort to build the organization's strength. They did not stop at simply recognizing a social opportunity but also ensured that the organization had enough resources to survive and work toward achieving its cause. They harnessed and managed several resources from as close as their own community to as distant as international organizations, seeking information from others to explore broad social opportunities.

In-house commitment. In-house commitment reflects how the leader's passion affects the organization by building commitment among members. Some of the leaders had experienced adverse circumstances in the past, which led them to build the organization to help others. People who have faced the same circumstances can readily identify and connect with the leader. Such shared situations provide a platform for both the leader and affected individuals to connect with the organization; indeed, both experienced a sense of meaning and relevance to the organization or a particular cause. For example, Leader 6, who works to prevent the sexual abuse of women and children, expressed that being a survivor helped her convince others to join her in pursuing the organization's vision:

I am a survivor. I was a victim as a child, I was a victim as an adult . . . [and] adult survivors joined . . . to kick off the organization. Most of the volunteers . . . who came in were actually adult survivors . . . We had a lot of support. I had a lot of support. And people came in, so it wasn't difficult . . . to devise what direction and where we were heading.

The leader also influences the organization's members to become fully engaged and be intense and persistent. They see the leader express profound and positive feelings in the course of carrying out his or her roles within the organization. This motivates individuals to volunteer their time and effort to contribute to growth, which is critical for the organization to endure. Leader 1 explained it this way:

Some have come, some have gone, some have moved out of the country, and new members have . . . come in, and one very important thing in [NGO name] is that most of us are volunteers. We only have . . . the program officer and office assistance who are on payroll. When we have projects, we build in an honorarium for them, but other times they volunteer their time and that makes [NGO name] very unique. Even . . . when we are short of funds, like the economic meltdown for instance, the organization continued, because even people within the organization make donations. Last year, one of us paid . . . our office rent for a year. We volunteer our time [and] our financial resources to keep the organization.

The leaders' passion toward the organization inspires members to display the same feelings, work together to meet the same goals, and overcome challenges together. Leader 25 explained,

Sometimes you might just get to the community, and it might be a festive period. Nobody wants to listen to what you have to say, but you know as they say, "before you really draw the heart of your people, you have to participate in what their beliefs are." So, setting up this whole thing was really not very easy. But we have young boys and girls of like minds, so we were able to go ahead with the process and got the necessary approval from relevant government authorities.

Leaders also stressed the importance of maintaining high commitment within the organization. For example, the leaders continuously and actively seek social opportunities and play important roles in bringing resources, activities, and functions together. Furthermore, the leaders focus on actively seeking partners and building future plans by meeting regularly with the organization's trustees regarding how to move forward with ideas. They also focus on developing employees' and volunteers' competencies by providing training and giving personal feedback. The following two quotes illustrate these activities:

I have to ensure that . . . I do the articulation, working with others, always trying to look ahead 5 years, 10 years, 20 years from now and having created departments, I ensure that they do what they are just meant to do. So, I play a supervisory role. Even though I am the president, I am virtually a nominal member in every department . . . and from time to time, I measure their work through record and achievement, verifying what we are doing . . . As I told them, it is the . . . parts working together in harmony and everyone doing their bit that we can have a functional and a whole body. (Leader 27)

The organization is like a baby for him, so he has always put up his 100% best, always the very best in managing the people, managing his executive, managing

his partners. When we say partners, [we mean] many people who believe in us . . . the community, the head of all communities in the Republic of Benin [bordering Nigeria to the east], student bodies. So it's just . . . the ability to keep everybody rolling. It's something I feel that . . . he has a 100% pass mark for. He has very good interpersonal relationships. He knows how to carry to people. He is also the friendly type; he loves networking, so those skills have really helped him to have a better role, a great role, in the organization. (Referral 3 commenting on Leader 18)

These statements show that based on their passion for the social enterprise, the leaders affected the actions of the organization's members. The leaders also guided employees and volunteers in managing challenging tasks by giving them firsthand advice on actions, expressions, and behaviors. This mentorship and guidance promoted members' connections to the organization and helped them see that the organization's goals were attained. For example, several social enterprise members expressed how they learned from the leader through ongoing advice and by observing the leader's passion as it was manifested in striving to achieve the organization's cause and goals. Two referrals expressed this concept:

I have learnt from her that anything that is worth doing at all should be done well . . . Anytime we meet she will always tell us "forget about benefits, forget that you are paid or you are not paid in the organization . . . do it as if there is no tomorrow, and that it's only God that will pay us." That is always what she is harkening in our heart, and that is the way she does her things . . . I have learnt a lot from it. (Referral 4 regarding Leader 1)

You know one thing I will say about him is passion. If there is a higher degree of passion, I would say that's what he is actually proceeding and that is what has moved this organization. Passion and love for the work. He could be very, very empathic, you know, put himself in the people's situation. And, every one of us has actually bought into that, and it is working for us. (Referral 1 regarding Leader 9)

Members of these social enterprises not only observe the leaders' passion but also try to mimic their actions. For example, one social enterprise member (Referral 2) mentioned how he learned from Leader 32 and has tried to imitate most of her actions as he carries out tasks in the work environment:

I have learnt so much from working with her. You know [NGO name] has been like a training ground for me. You know, I see integrity, I see loyalty, I see passion, and I see a lot of hard work. And personally I have been impacted.

This points to how the leaders' passion motivates the organizations' members to have faith in the leader and its social mission and be motivated to serve the organization.

Attractiveness. The organizations' attractiveness involves the abilities and competencies the organization uses to attract external talent and resources and retain and motivate internal capabilities. An organization can attract a higher quantity and quality of resources and capabilities when it engages in socially responsible actions. For the social enterprise to attract multiple resources and capabilities—both internally and externally—it seems pivotal that the leader's values intertwine with the organization's missions. And, the leader must take actions to achieve that mission. The values such leaders exhibit motivates others to consciously nurture the enterprise's processes through interacting and networking; this, in turn, leads to actionable opportunities while also achieving successful social performance. Leader passion seems to be an attractive characteristic to others, and as a result, new opportunities become available. For example, Leader 1 noted that her efforts to provide social help and alleviate social problems provided opportunities for other organizations and the government to collaborate with her organization:

Because we have been able to help the government . . . in coming up with policies, each time the government have anything to do with women, they call on us. For instance . . . two weeks ago, I . . . was called upon to . . . train teachers in Edo central on how to facilitate or teach family life and HIV/AIDS education, which is sexuality education, to people in primary and senior secondary school because the government have incorporated these topics into the curriculum. So myself and a lecturer from Uniben were commissioned to go to Edo central. We stayed four days there facilitating the sections on personal skills [and] life skills for the teachers, training them and helping them . . . tackle the reproductive health issues of the adolescents in Nigeria. Such opportunities have also come where organizations in the Netherlands have called us to come over to talk to trafficked girls and counsel them on accepting themselves, rebuilding their self-esteem, and training them on life skills. So, it has yielded well . . . that we have developed our expertise . . . and are able to use it to better the lives of adolescents and women.

Passionate leaders are also recognized and given support to build financial resources to support the organization's legitimacy. Networking is an important activity in this regard. Others see that certain organizations are attractive and are encouraged to engage. This, too, opens new opportunities. Leader 29 explained,

If you are committed to any cause, it might be difficult at first but while you progress with that zeal, with that commitment, things will begin to unfold and people will begin to see the sincerity of purpose in you, including donors, yes. So, because you think you are doing it alone, you don't know people are watching. There are others who have been in the NGO business for a long time . . . They discover you are serious, and you are committed to what you are doing. They recommend you for workshops and conferences and before you know it, you start getting emails [and are invited to attend] so, so, and so conferences.

In addition to investing emotional strength in the organization, the leaders are more motivated when their efforts are visible and appreciated by society-at-large. This recognition opens new windows to exploit more opportunities and subsequently affect more societal issues. Leader 30 noted,

Last week I received a mail from the . . . African Development Bank Group Annual General Meeting in Morocco Even though we are looking for sponsorship and delegates, I was invited to be an observer . . . because of the activities and the kind of thing we are doing and the kind of impact our activities have actually created . . . We are becoming very visible to the society, and they are recognizing what we are doing.

In sum, the leaders' passion for their social enterprise leads to several positive effects. Foremost, the leaders become well known and recognized in the societies in which they work. In doing so, new channels open up to exploit additional opportunities to affect society in a positive way.

Social Value Creation

The leaders interviewed for the present study reported the kind of social impact their enterprises made and how the organizations carried out their activities. From this line of questioning, we uncovered how leader passion was positive for social value creation, both directly and by building organizational power. This was demonstrated through four social enterprise impacts: (a) empowerment, (b) awareness raising, (c) personal assistance, and (d) role modeling.

Empowerment. Empowerment is the ability to do or affect something such that it acts on a person or a thing and addresses the issues of minority groups' powerlessness (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Empowerment usually involves enhancing self-efficacy and personal or political power among individuals, families, and communities to develop confidence, insights, understanding,

and personal skills. The leaders sampled for the present study pursued their social mission of empowering society using a bottom-up approach, starting with individuals (particularly women), then moving to a larger group within the community, and then reaching society-at-large. Several of the leaders noted that empowering women in the community opened more opportunities to develop the economy and diminish poverty because women represent most of the world's poor population. Leader 1 noted,

For women to be able to actualize themselves and enjoy their lives in full without violence . . . we brought other NGOs together and helped to oblige. Edo state passed a law against female genital mutilation, and it was the first in the country. It's helping women to live their lives, not just to exist. Because [NGO name] exists to make women live their lives and live violent-free lives, and as women continue to face violence on a daily basis, we cannot keep quiet. Women in Nigeria form about 50% of the population, and if 50% of any population is left behind, there will certainly be no development. And, when there is no development, there will be no peace. So we want to continue to exist and live for the women We look forward to having an egalitarian society where women in Nigeria can take decisions for themselves.

Moving from empowering individuals to empowering a larger group, the leaders often observed an absence of support for the community, even among local residents. They thus worked to build community members' skills to enhance their support for one another and gain increased access to resources that could meet various needs. According to Leader 2, providing such support for the community increased and influenced the control the residents had over their quality of life:

[Under the People's Democratic Party (PDP) regime] development was very, very low and also it impacted on the citizenry so that [the] spirit "I don't care" became very strong. People did not care about their environment or their community. Sand encroachment on the road was as at its worst. Things were terrible in Benin City . . . and even crime rate was very high that period . . . in the midst of all those things happening, the actions of [the NGO] developed a sense of care and responsibility for the community . . .

At the community level, the leaders also provided social support by improving living conditions for people in the community. To do so, they implemented solutions to conflicts and issues in the community by providing health care services, sanitation, or infrastructure. As a result, community members had more influence and gained more control. Leader 3 provided an example:

. . . We did realize that to solve these questions is to come up with an idea of an NGO that can attract development projects to the community to . . . help the extremely poor persons Whenever there is a project program or an oil company's program for the people of the community, it never gets to the source because [individuals or organizations handling projects for community development] will attack it and keep it for themselves. Especially when there is no water The river-borne water is under attack, and the people realize [they] have to have a borehole for themselves, but they do not even allow these people to fetch good water . . . so the people have no access to basic necessities of life, like access to health care service, access to good drinking water The same thing with health care service, the same people cannot travel outside the community to access health care service. So, we said with an NGO will be able to assist the people and also a way of attracting development projects to the place so that these people can have access.

Most of the leaders interviewed expressed the importance of empowering both individuals and communities to achieve a better standard of living.

Awareness raising. Raising awareness captures how the leaders engage in various processes that demonstrate to individuals how the organization operates. This can make the social enterprise attractive to both community members and external agents and result in heightened awareness of the social enterprise and its mission. In doing so, the leaders show that certain actions are favorable and beneficial for personal development and for developing the locality. For example, Leader 22 explained the measures he took to change people's perceptions to reduce poverty and maternal mortality:

We shared with the community elders and leaders the need for family planning, the need for proper child spacing, and the need to prevent maternal mortality and unwanted pregnancy Initially, some of them laughed and said that "children are from God, how can you now tell us the number of children to have?" . . . But they eventually gave their blessings and supported the program.

In addition, by raising awareness, the leaders improved many individuals' mind-sets by inspiring courage to see the intrinsic reward of proposed ideas and actions. In doing this, individuals were able to integrate favorable actions and behaviors into their lives. For example, one effort addressed discrimination among people living with disabilities. Leader 27 shared,

Parents are too ashamed to be associated to their children with disabilities. They could not afford to be identified with the luxury of a child with disabilities, so much so as bringing them out to be educated The number of children with disabilities do not [have] access to their parents' love and care The

challenges of discrimination, stigmatization was there. [We see] a poor attitude of the society and also environmental and structural constraints But . . . with the awareness we are creating, we are gradually dismantling [these barriers], and I believe with time we [will] get our society to be appreciative of the fact that a person with physical challenges is living right in our midst.

In working to create sustainable community development, the leaders adopted several strategies to promote and inform individuals about social issues. Their aim was to ensure that individuals implemented appropriate actions that would prevent issues from reoccurring. For example, Leader 9 described the approach he took to raise awareness for child care and protection:

I saw a child being brought into the university of teaching hospital for circumcision, and the mother was in handcuffs We were told that the mother delivered in the prison and the child has to come for circumcision from the prison and return back to the prison, I didn't like that as an individual, and I thought it was wrong. So we tried to make a case for the child. When it fell on deaf ears, I wrote an article on it and published in a newspaper in Port Harcourt I titled that article, "Prisoner from Birth" and that made a number of governmental agencies looking for us and trying to quiet us, but somehow we made a point

This example illustrates that raising awareness is important for these leaders to develop the communities in which they work. They used several strategies, including public relations, the media, personal communication with individuals and the larger community, and advocating for and educating community members about issues. Data suggested that such efforts benefited from having passionate leaders who integrate the social enterprise into who they are and do not hesitate to go the extra mile to meet objectives.

Personal assistance. To enhance social activities within the community, the leaders went to great lengths to provide personal assistance to individual community members, primarily to promote sustainable social development. In doing so, the leaders identified specific areas of need and responded to those needs. Because they wanted to promote sustainable development, the leaders worked to provide a better standard of living by giving extra support and getting involved in personal care. For example, they often provided extra support to promote health in their communities. As Leader 22 noted,

In 2012 we carried out free HIV testing and counseling for more than 500 to 600 persons, making us about the most effective NGOs in that area.

The responding leaders went beyond their limits to provide this individual assistance to ensure that the community as a whole was moving toward its highest potential. Their assistance took several forms. For example, Leader 36 noted how they provided personal support for individuals living with HIV and their families:

When people go into the center, they take a test and if they turn out positive, we refer them to the teaching hospital in Zaria for clinical management, and then we ask them to come to public meetings every month. So, we give them moral support and at times if we are able to, we help them pay for their children's school fees.

The leaders provided other forms of support for community members as well. For example, Leader 10 noted that for the society to reach its full potential, everyone must be carried along, especially disadvantaged women and children:

The organization basically focuses on seeing that . . . those who are of school age . . . go back to school, and those who cannot go to school also get some skills in terms of . . . learning a job so that they can stand on their own We realized that not everybody can be in school, even though they want to be in school, due to what they have suffered We also support women, widows who have lost their husbands due to HIV and AIDS We try to ensure that women in the community are able to use community resources to help themselves. So, the organization is out there to help those who are vulnerable in the society, which [includes] women and children.

In summary, the studied leaders did not just provide community services but also went further to support various constituencies that were less privileged and needed personalized, individual attention.

Role modeling. Leaders who act as positive examples for others to follow can influence cognitive perceptions and behaviors as the followers make specific life decisions. When individuals see the leaders' passion for a social cause, they are influenced to emulate attitudes and behaviors (Bosma, Hessels, Schutjens, Praag, & Verheul, 2012). Through their actions and determination, the interviewed leaders portrayed themselves as role models for individuals in the community. They consciously worked to turn their weaknesses into strengths and possibilities and provided something useful for their communities' members. For example, Leader 27 emphasized the importance of not disregarding persons with disabilities (like himself) but going beyond and

giving them the same privileges and opportunities afforded to every member of the society:

I . . . am a living testimony. I use myself as an example . . . because I came from a very humble background. What really works for me is that I enjoyed the love and care of my parents. They believed that in spite of my disability [and] even though they were not sure of what I will become, they just encouraged me When they knew that there was an opportunity for me to be educated, they took advantage of that opportunity. I threw myself at any given opportunity. I tell parents, "Look, this one can become whatever their dream is, so give them the opportunity." I am not on the street begging, I am working in a corporate organization, and I am paid I have also served as a beacon of hope to physically challenged persons saying that if [I] can be successful in spite of [my] challenge, then the sky is the limit for anyone who has one form of disabilities or the other People are beginning to know that physically challenged children are a blessing in disguise. They have something to contribute to the process. So, using myself . . . is about the most enviable example that everyone can lay his hands [on], and this has indeed influenced [the community]. As such, people regard me as a role model.

Individuals who have observed the passionate leaders closely learn from them that certain goals can be achieved (Bosma et al., 2012). For example, Leader 30 expressed that people around him gained insights and learned from his actions:

Some people see me as a visioner, and so many people learn from me, especially the younger generation. They see me as a role model . . . If I want this thing I will always work hard to get it . . . So many people has learnt a lot of this, they have gained a lot of insights, a lot of opportunities through this project . . . So they are really seeing me as a blessing in their lives. Even . . . the adults when they see me, they even say: "Ah [personal name], how I wish I could have started at your age." So yeah, these people are really happy with what I am doing, and I started very early . . . Even as a young person I started pursuing my dream, my vision, and all that, so they are impressed.

It is apparent that individuals admire these leaders based on the way they present their actions in facilitating change within and around society. Referral 2 discussing Leader 31 noted,

Values like hard work, diligence, honesty, contentment, democracy, speaking up for your rights and things like that . . . He sees himself as responsible for exhibiting those values and encouraging them in other Nigerians and other people. He sees it as a responsibility and a leader of example for other people.

In addition, the referrals expressed that leaders provide inspiration for others based on how they relate to problems in their particular context. For example, Referral 3 emphasized that because Leader 32 had experienced a particular issue herself, she understood how others facing the same issue felt. She could therefore relate to them easily. Referral 3 commented,

What drives her passion is . . . she is a survivor. She has been there, do you understand, she knows what it is like. So, it is easy for other people who are going through it to relate to help or how to relate to them because she can tell them “I have been there, and I survived.”

The leaders interviewed positively influenced the lives of others and presented themselves as role models through their behaviors. For example, the leaders were transparent in that they exhibited passionate behaviors and provided guidelines for other people to emulate. Furthermore, individuals identified with them and learned new skills from the entrepreneurs to develop themselves as individuals and their communities on a broader scale.

Self-Identity Salience

The data also revealed how the leaders perceived their own performance in terms of organizational power and social value creation, which provided input to the salience of their social enterprise engagement for their self-identity. Specifically, the data indicated that leaders appraised the salience of their social enterprise leadership in relation to three indicators: (a) organizational success, (b) affecting others' lives, and (c) understanding their own importance.

Organizational success. Success in an organization can be measured based by financials, market share, processes in which the organization engages, the people involved, and future potential. In the social context, success occurs when the enterprise maintains sustainable social change in the society in which it operates. Because the organization's individuals must expend various levels of effort and dedication, the data reveal that organizational success and progress become very important signals for the leader. Celebrating success and progress can infuse passion into the individual and consequently the organization. Leaders 5 and 22 both expressed this concept:

It [the NGO] is in the network news, it's in the network program, it's in the state television program, it's in the media, it's in the print media, it's in the magazines . . . Who could do [or] give feature stories? That was a trigger. It was intriguing. It was awesome. (Leader 5)

I don't want to boast, but I will say that we are about the most effective NGO in Edo State. So we work, we . . . have people that come from all parts of the world. When they come, they marvel that "Do we still have NGOs that are committed like this in Nigeria?" They are surprised because for us we did not start the [NGO] as a source of livelihood, we started it because of a vision; a very heartfelt vision, because we want to help society. So, it is the success that makes us go ahead and makes us want to continue. (Leader 22)

Clearly, the data indicate a connection between organizational performance and the identity salience of engaging with the social enterprise. Indeed, progress for the organization is attached to the leader's bond with the activity. Leader 29 explained,

There was [a] proposal I wrote in 2010 . . . and . . . midway into it I was invited to come to Germany to share group practice with others . . . I was there, and it was . . . remarkable, so it was a big break for me as a person and for the organization.

This degree of leader–organization closeness indicates that when the organization faces challenging times and requires heavy personal sacrifices, there is less to celebrate than when the organization is on more stable ground. Referral 2, discussing Leader 31, exemplified this notion:

I think the general attitude has been rising to the challenge and believing that nothing can be impossible . . . Sacrificing present gain for future goals is kind of . . . personal to him It was just last month that he actually got a salary . . . and this is . . . almost 6 years down the line. So, it's been a lot of personal sacrifice . . . to ensure that the organization was on stable footing Now he is a lot happier He was telling me a few days ago that things are going well for him He was hiring more staff, which is a sign of growth, . . . so I think there has been a lot of progress, and he's very happy about it.

Thus, our data reveal that how the leaders' judge their own success in organizing the social enterprise will affect how salient engaging with the enterprise becomes for the leader's self-identity.

Affecting others' lives. Our data reveal that creating social value is an important outcome for the leader on a very personal level. To some extent, how successful the social enterprise is reflects the leader's attitude toward his or her efforts. This seems to drive his or her engagement even deeper, promotes investing more time and energy in operating the social enterprise, and further influences what this may mean for his or her self-identity. It also affects the

importance the leaders attribute to the cause. Our data reveal that when these leaders see what they have done for society, this insight strengthens the importance of engaging with the social enterprise for them. Leader 13 expressed this concept:

You know, when I walk down the street, and I see people thanking me for all the work we are doing, particularly in our outreach programs on television, I am very impressed. I am happy that we were able to assist our services in having impact in the society.

The leaders also expressed feelings of joy and satisfaction when their goals were met. Leader 25 said,

Some . . . bring joy; that is, seeing people . . . that their needs are met. Seeing people coming together trying to reach out to get basic living things . . . That [is] one of the things that gives . . . satisfaction.

In addition to positive feelings derived from meeting social needs, the data also reveal that contributing to the lives of others was a motivating factor for these leaders. They are helping others and continuing to make a difference in achieving sustainable social change, in part because their impact is intrinsically rewarding. In illustrating this, Leader 29 commented,

When you know that if you help in your own little way to give . . . life to somebody who was already dying and suddenly you see that person picking up and becom[ing] healthy again, it gives joy that no amount of money can buy. So, it is a motivating factor that if you see that person who was almost dead, and you were able to contribute your own little quota to revive that person, it feels good.

Apart from the desire to help others, experiencing intense positive feelings and positively affecting others in the community gave meaning to the lives of these leaders. For example, Leader 5 expressed how affecting others gives her a sense of purpose and a reason to look forward to each day. Knowing she is a part of developing the well-being of others is satisfying:

There is no place, I would say, where sexual violence is so dynamic . . . And, [this work] has made me meet a lot of people. I am just like the mother of all nations, I am a mother to many with a lot children; I have been able to develop a lot of relationships [with] them. I have such a large family from those relationships, and it's been able to give me [a] sense of purpose. More importantly, I have a reason to wake up in the morning. I have a reason to go to

where I am going, you know, I am contributing to many people's lives. I think that is my biggest asset; people [I] have been able to meet along the way, the victims who have become survivors, the survivors who have become overcomers, who are living and having a life, [and] getting the nation to recognize that we have a problem.

Positively affecting the lives of others makes engaging in the social enterprise meaningful for the leader and important for how they view themselves. Such positive feedback can motivate them to be even more engaged and further develop their desire to continuously help others within the community in which they operate.

Understanding one's importance. The data also suggest that if the leaders understand their own importance for reaching a mission, engaging with the social enterprise is even more important for the leaders' self-identity. The need to make a social impact is imperative for the leaders to feel fulfilled in the tasks they undertake. When needs are not met or fully achieved, the leaders experience frustration, as Leader 3 expressed:

When there are things you know [that] you can do, and you cannot because of all these [barriers], sometimes you get frustrated.

Despite barriers, the leaders continue to engage in regular activities to develop the communities in which they operate. They remain hopeful that their progress will promote their cause, yield more recognition, and generate other engagements that shape society through sustainable change and sharing a common vision. Quitting is not an option. As Leader 36 articulated, they understand how important they are for the social mission:

We hope that we will get enough test kits [HIV tests] so that we will be able to test others, and we hope that one day we will get funds so that we can pay more people's school fees on a regular basis not just once in a blue moon when people give us something. We hope that we will be able to pay a lot more. We hope that someday we will get people to partner with us to be able to do more and provide more blessings.

Indeed, leaders are dissatisfied that they cannot do everything due to scarce resources. But they still believe they have the competence to create change. Leaders 1 and 5 summarized this idea:

Here [there] is [an] epidemic [of] trafficking and issues are still coming up on trafficking. Some of the girls resist trafficking because we have been able to

reach them on how to acquire receiver skills and negotiations skills. We have a lot . . . who need assistance that we are not able to render assistance to, but we still keep them on our list. So, definitely, I don't feel very happy about it, but there's nothing I can do for now. (Leader 1)

People begin to get more interest in our micro-finance activities because it's interest-free, and the demand is just too much. Even people have been calling us from Rivers state, from Edo state, from Enugu. But we are unable to go to that place because of limited resources We feel so bad about it, but there is nothing we can do than to put more efforts into continu[ing] to write grant applications. (Leader 5)

To meet current needs, the leaders intend to expand their focus to meet more social needs by taking actions in advocacy, reaching more persons in the community, and collaborating more with governments. Leader 32 expressed how she feels responsible for using her voice to affect change:

I know where we need to work more now. Support for those suffering from the disease, the patients, those needy patients, [is] not something we can do [alone]. It's only when you have a policy. This is where policy formulation is very, very important, and we can't make it happen until we go and scream at that national assembly. If we do not go there to scream, they will not understand, I am telling you. That is my next line of action.

In sum, the data reveal that leaders who understand their own importance for meeting the enterprise's social mission make engagement on several levels an important part of their identity. This engagement extends to meeting more and different needs, reaching greater numbers of people in need, and advocating for people who need help with government agencies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The objective in the present study was to understand the role of leader passion in social enterprises. More specifically, it acknowledges the contextual challenges imposed on social enterprise leaders in sub-Saharan Africa. The main outcome and contribution of this work is an inductive model that shows how leaders' passion is necessary for targeting the intended social mission, as illustrated in Figure 2. The model provides three main insights.

First, leader passion can help strengthen the organizational power of the social enterprise. A passionate leader may motivate people to trust that a particular organization is worthy of their attention and resources. Because

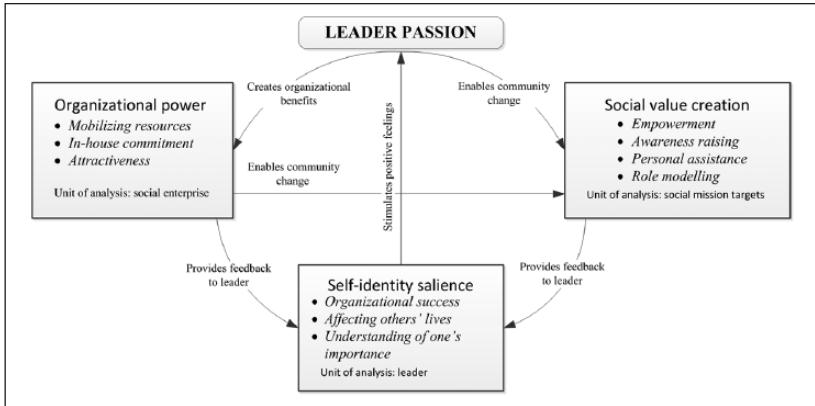


Figure 2. Model illustrating how leader passion shapes social enterprising.

institutional apparatuses provide limited support, image- and relationship-building are needed to acquire resources. Support from friends, family, and donor agencies are typically needed to realize goals and open opportunities for further funding. The organization's members must also be convinced of the enterprise's potential because they earn very little money (if any) despite their commitment and the long hours invested. Moreover, high competition exists among social entrepreneurship efforts for legitimacy and attention in the community. As the model illustrates, leader passion may strengthen the organizational power in relation to these issues through greater resource mobilization, commitment among organizational members, and organizational attractiveness.

Second, leader passion can contribute to creating greater social value. It is not easy to come in as a single actor and make changes in contexts where traditions, beliefs, and collective norms are strong governing mechanisms. The findings indicate that empowerment, raising awareness, personal assistance, and role modeling are four means that the leaders use to anchor the social mission among the targeted people. These actions seem important for actual change to occur. Leader passion may be a useful resource for funneling the energy and motivation to make small, step-by-step improvements by having discussions, handling resistance, showing how one cares, and setting a good example.

Third, the findings indicate that there may be a self-reinforcing circle in that passion contributes to organizational power and creating social value, which in turn provides the leader with input on how well he or she is doing as the social enterprise leader. Passion stems from the feelings that arise from

engaging in activities that are important to one's self-identity. The findings suggest that the positive input the leader receives on how effectively he or she is performing helps make engaging in the social enterprise an even bigger part of the leader's self-identity. In other words, passion seems to indirectly spur further passion.

Considering these three insights, the essence is that the findings suggest that leader passion enables social activities to be undertaken in contexts characterized by a high degree of poverty and informality, such as conditions found in sub-Saharan Africa.

Contributions to Theory

This study makes several contributions to theory. First, it increases understanding of how and why some individuals may succeed in achieving social missions in contexts characterized by acute poverty and strong informal institutions. In doing so it contributes to theory by stressing the role of single individuals as locomotives for social change. More specifically, it contributes by recognizing the role of leader passion as a key element for gaining people's trust in the social enterprise leader and the social mission. In being specifically focused on NGO leaders, findings contribute particularly to knowledge on the importance single individuals may have for the interplay among NGOs, the state, and development in contexts such as Africa.

Second, the study contributes to the passion and leadership literature, which to date has been far too neglected. Indeed, it highlights a possible link between leader passion and organizational processes rather than focusing on people's passion for leisure activities and individual-level outcomes such as satisfaction. Whereas leader passion is not explicitly measured in the present study, the authors acknowledge that leaders' passion is a stream of research that would benefit from further studies that draw out details on what it means to be a passionate leader and what consequences result for the leader, the followers, and the organization. To the leadership literature, the present article adds the notion that it may be worthwhile to study more deeply how various kinds of leader affect (moods, emotions, and feelings) impact organizational processes and outcomes, rather than focusing primarily on contagion effects and how the leaders' affective display influences how they are perceived. It would be relevant to expand research into stakeholder reactions (not only followers) and the implications these have for organizing and performance.

Third, while NGOs are not necessarily representative of social entrepreneurship (see the discussion in the limitations section), the findings

derived from the Nigerian NGO leaders constituting this study's particular sample can still contribute to the field of social entrepreneurship. Research examining how social entrepreneurs as leaders influence the social enterprise is scant. Theoretical studies have focused merely on conceptualizing social entrepreneurship (Haugh, 2007; Lumpkin et al., 2013), whereas empirical studies have focused on social entrepreneurs as change agents (Partzsch & Ziegler, 2011), entrepreneurial models (Mair et al., 2012), and ranking success factors (Sharir & Lerner, 2006). To shed light on social entrepreneurs' feelings, although studied among a certain type of social entrepreneurs, adds understanding of the potentially active and vivid interplay between the leader and the social enterprise, including both how it organizes and creates social value. Findings do not merely confirm that the individual *is* important, but it develops a starting point regarding *how* the leader is important.

Finally, although the findings cannot be generalized to all types of social entrepreneurship, they still recognize the importance of context. In the context studied, it is challenging to mobilize resources and make changes. Much hinges on the leader and his or her ability to build and manage relationships and earn people's trust. The findings suggest that for trust to develop in this particular context, leader passion is a key. This adds to the notion that to keep social entrepreneurship theory powerful in predicting and explaining relationships, the context in which the social enterprise operates cannot be ignored (Felício, Martins Gonçalves, & da Conceição Gonçalves, 2013; Rivera-Santos et al., 2015).

Practical Implications

The findings offer several practical implications. To educate and train prospective social entrepreneurs, our findings suggest that focusing on the leaders' significance for the organization is important. This means that in addition to the skills that Smith, Besharov, Wessels, and Chertok (2012) outlined, such as examining the organization's commercial viability and social mission, recognizing how they are distinct, and seeking strategies to integrate leaders by acquiring interpersonal, decision-making, and differentiation skills, the present study suggests that focus should also land on learning deeply about one's passions and how they are maintained and exploited.

The present study's findings also have practical implications for donor agencies. Although each donor agency has its own criteria for awarding funding, many do not evaluate the entrepreneur's personality and motivation. So,

in addition to common qualifying criteria such as having a robust business model, a clear social mission, the ability to grow or increase the enterprise's social impact, and a strong partnership with stakeholders, the present study suggests adding criteria that captures the leader's passion for the social activity.

Limitations and Future Research

As with all studies, the present study has some limitations. First, it builds on data from Nigerian NGO leaders. NGOs are not necessarily representative of social entrepreneurship. As the case description reveals, the sampled NGOs can, however, all be classified as a particular type of nonprofit social enterprise. The partial overlap between social enterprises and NGOs may not be equally visible around the world, but in the African context, NGOs seem to have become a means for many purposes, of which social entrepreneurship is only one. This said, care should be taken before findings are transferred to NGOs that cannot be classified as social enterprises. While the study of nonprofit social enterprises is a warranted complement to studies such as one in this issue by Littlewood and Holt (in press), who study for-profit and hybrid structure social enterprises, care should be taken before findings are transferred to other social enterprise forms. Second, because the present study was carried out in only one African country—and with the largest population and economy—the findings may not be representative for social entrepreneurship in other parts of the continent. Third, although the findings were derived from qualitative data, the research design inherently bears a risk that other researchers may generate other findings from the same data. Finally, the model developed focuses data collected at one point in time. The data from the referrals, however, assisted in verifying the data gathered from the entrepreneurs and resulted in a richer data set. Still, future research is encouraged to follow social entrepreneurs over time. It may be useful to combine observations with interview data and archival material.

Despite these limitations, the present study has contributed to both theory and practice by exploring how leader passion may play a role in social enterprises in the sub-Saharan African context. The findings suggest that leader passion, to some extent, may be a key factor for success in that it contributes to building organizational power and creating social value. Leader passion may make it easier to earn people's trust in the leader and in the social mission, which is important for remaining committed in contexts characterized by acute poverty and informality.

Appendix

Overview of Studied Social Enterprises.

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
1	Focuses on women's rights and empowerment. Raises awareness about sexual health, provides training programs to develop skills, and gives micro credit to women to start small-scale businesses.	Female	5	Workers (5)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities
2	Ensures environmental sustainability by providing access to clean water and sanitation to communities in rural areas.	Male	—	—	—
3	Promotes sustainable livelihood through integrated community development by building community institutions' competence to initiate and implement sustainable development projects and by providing group governance in agriculture and its operations.	Male	2	Trustees (2)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior
4	Provides care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis while trying to prevent the spread of such diseases. Focuses on alleviating the physical, psychological, and socioeconomic impact of these diseases and mitigating poverty through capacity building.	Male	—	—	—
5	Empowers, strengthens, and encourages HIV/AIDS patients and strives to alleviate poverty through training, giving credit facilities, and enlightening farmers in local societies.	Male	1	Trustees	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
6	Aims to contribute to an effective and sustainable sexual response by taking actions against sexual abuse toward women and children. Creates opportunities for business to facilitate community development. Specifically, this NGO creates opportunities for interaction, business networking, and social responsibility needed for positive change.	Female	4	Family (1) Workers (3)	Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities
7		Male	1	Trustees	
8	Focuses on the promotion and welfare of children. The organization deals with disadvantaged and abandoned children in society.	Male	11	Workers (4) Mentor (1) Trustees (4) Family (2)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations
9	Focuses on providing education for children and youth awareness by campaigning for children's rights and eradicating child abuse and neglect. This NGO works through public campaign seminars, workshops, and books/publications.	Male	1	Worker (1)	Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
10	Focuses on supporting children by supporting education. In addition, the organization supports women who have lost their husbands through HIV/AIDS.	Male	1	Worker (1)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities
11	Deals with health-related issues, including malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and reproductive rights by building health centers. Advocates for human rights by providing a sustainable livelihood, sponsorship, water and sanitation, and skill development.	Female	2	Workers (2)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior
12	Empowers and enlightens youth toward sustainable national development by providing mentorship, training, and resources to aspiring youth and children.	Male	—	—	—
13	Promotes sustainable development by providing health care, capacity building, and workshops to raise awareness of health issues.	Male	—	—	—
14	Promotes human rights through human resources and development, providing financial and management training, and organizational restructuring.	Male	2	Friends (2)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
15	Focuses on alleviating poverty and promoting positive change through youth empowerment. Provides several programs, including training to teach youth how to search for and harness entrepreneurial opportunities. The organization also focuses on reproductive health with youth.	Male	3	Worker (1) Friend (1) Prior project partner (1)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations
16	Focuses on developing sustainable peace by identifying the causes, nature, and extent of conflicts and restiveness. This social enterprise also analyzes and disseminates information to design and deliver intervention and advocacy services to promote understanding and facilitate behaviors, perceptions, and policy changes to enhance sustainable management of development.	Male	1	Trustee (1)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities Reflections on the leader's role and behavior
17	Seeks to improve the lives of single parents. Provides vocational training and support for self-reliance and independent living of single parents and vulnerable people in society.	Male	—	—	—
18	Focuses on building the mind-set of youth and empowering them to resist corruption and violence. Specifically promotes ethical standards and strives to create positive change in society.	Male	5	Family (1) Workers (2) Prior partner (1) Friend (1)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
19	Provides training and certification for professionals who have particular interest in the issues of development. Provides the platform for individual development to achieve equitable environmental, economic, and sociopolitical development in society.	Male	4	Workers (4)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities Reflections on the leader's role and behavior
20	This faith-based organization focuses on promoting policies and practices for sustainable water and sanitation delivery for both urban and rural poor.	Male	2	Family (1) Worker (1)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities
21	Provides a means to support individuals and rebuild the lives of families affected by poverty, natural disasters, illnesses, and conflicts. The organization also focuses on promoting sustainable development, providing personal empowerment for individuals they serve.	Male	1	Worker (1)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations
22	Focuses on empowering women and youth in the communities in which it operates. Promotes issues related to human rights, community health development, water and sanitation research, and advocacy to provide a platform for peace building.	Male	—	—	—
23	Works within developmental sectors to promote health-related issues and provide an educational environment in local communities.	Male	—	—	—

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
24	Works with women to fight gender and sexual violence, create gender equality, and provide amenities to alleviate the issues of poverty among women and their children.	Female	—	—	—
25	Works closely with individuals in communities to manage and prevent malaria and provides training to promote good health in general.	Male	—	—	—
26	Caters to the needs of women and youth for education, especially for women married at a young age without the opportunity to be educated.	Female	1	Worker (1)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior
27	Empowers people through education and gainful employment either in the organized sector or helping them set up their own businesses. The organization also raises awareness for the disabled by emphasizing that persons with disabilities have rights to participate in the economic, social, and political spheres without dissociation or discrimination.	Male	—	—	—
28	Focuses on promoting independent living, participation, human rights, and including persons living with disabilities in development efforts. The organization also works to educate, support, and empower persons with disabilities and their families to maximize their potential in society.	Male	—	—	—

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
29	Focuses on promoting social development, alleviating poverty, promoting democracy and good governance to empower individuals and communities.	Male	—	—	—
30	Provides entrepreneurial initiatives for youth. The organization also focuses on issues relating to educating, enlightening, and empowering youth to be self-sufficient and innovative to personally drive and motivate their interest in the corporate environment, leading to the development of their communities.	Male	—	—	—
31	Focuses on connecting youth with information and communication technology—enabled opportunities to address the unemployment gap by providing demand-driven information and communication technologies, entrepreneurship, and life skill training.	Male	31	Workers (2) Family (1)	Workers (2) Family (1)
32	Promotes awareness of breast cancer to eliminate misconceptions about the disease and provides health care and support to women suffering with breast cancer.	Female	8	Workers (4) Friend (1) Family (3)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations

(continued)

Appendix. (continued)

Social enterprise	Focus	Leader gender	Number of referrals	Referrals' relationship to leader	Perspectives provided by referrals
33	Focuses on empowering and educating youth. Provides micro loans for individuals within the community to start small-scale business as a means to alleviate poverty.	Male	2	Family (2)	Reflections on the leader's role and behavior Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations
34	Focuses on alleviating poverty within the community by providing micro financing to individuals in the community as a means to promote a better livelihood for persons living in the community.	Male	2	Friends (2)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities Reflections on the leader's motivation and inclinations
35	Focuses on providing essential infrastructure and amenities by collaborating with several local partners in various communities. The aim is to alleviate poverty and promote a peaceful society.	Male	1	Worker (1)	Reflections on the social enterprise and its activities
36	Provides counseling and support for people and their affected families who are living with HIV.	Female	—	—	—
37	Targets support for poor people living in the community and provides support for individuals who are physically impaired. Provides capacity building on malnourishment and health-related issues for members of the community.	Male	—	—	—

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Notes

1. Passion should not be confused with compassion, which relates to the empathetic emotion generated from others in suffering and reactions to alleviate their pain (Madden, Duchon, Madden, & Ashmos Plowman, 2012, p. 689; Miller, Grimes, McMullen, & Vogus, 2012, p. 620). The present study does not examine compassion.
2. The overarching questions the interviews covered included the following: What are the organization's major activities? How was this organization started? How was the opportunity for the organization recognized? What has been and currently is your role in the organization? What is your motivation for being involved in this organization? What other people and actors have also been important for the organization? What major challenges have you had or are you currently facing? Please describe your efforts in gathering resources. What, if any, impact has the organization had on society? In hindsight, what would you have done differently (if anything) and why?
3. Nigeria is a multilingual country, and English is the official language functioning as a lingua franca. For many of the study's informants, English was not their mother tongue, and their English often varied from both standard American and British English. Illustrated quotes are reported verbatim; they have not been corrected for grammatical errors. The authors added words or phrases (in brackets), however, to add clarity where deemed necessary.

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