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\*Corresponding author: Isa Nsereko,  
Department of Entrepreneurship,  
Makerere University Business School,  
Kampala, Uganda  
E-mail: [insereko@mubs.ac.ug](mailto:insereko@mubs.ac.ug)

Reviewing editor:  
Manlio Del Giudice, Link Campus  
University, Italy

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## MANAGEMENT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Personal initiative: Its power in social entrepreneurial venture creation

Isa Nsereko<sup>1\*</sup>, Waswa Balunywa<sup>1</sup>, John Munene<sup>2</sup>, Laura Orobia<sup>1</sup> and Ngoma Muhammed<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** Social entrepreneurship literature bears a positive cast on poverty reduction and social problem-solving. Studies have shown that social entrepreneurial venture activities have far-reaching socioeconomic impact, especially in solving societal challenges. We argue that given the nature of social problems, certain personality traits are valuable. Individuals with personal initiative are capable of using their prior knowledge, proactive and innovative and experience to be alert as they create social ventures that create social impact. The study examined the role of personal initiative in social entrepreneurial venture creation among Community-Based Organizations (CBO) in a developing country. Scholars have examined a number of psychological traits underlying Social Entrepreneurial Venture Creation but less emphasis has been laid on the role of personal initiative in creating social entrepreneurial ventures. We used a sample of 243 Kampala Capital City Authority CBO owners and the results indicate that personal initiative in terms of proactiveness and innovation is positively and significantly associated with social entrepreneurial venture creation.

**Subjects:** Philosophy of Psychology; Social Psychology; Business, Management and Accounting; Philosophy

**Keywords:** social entrepreneurial venture creation; personal initiative; proactiveness; innovation and personal initiative theory

### 1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurs make significant and diverse contributions to their communities and societies. This is done through adopting business models that offer creative solutions to complex and persistent social problems (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; Ferraris & Grieco, 2015; Weber & Kratzer, 2013).

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Isa Nsereko is a PhD holder and a lecturer in entrepreneurship and business administration at Makerere University Business School in Uganda Kampala. He has a passion for social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general. He has written books about entrepreneurship at ordinary and advanced secondary school levels and colleges. He is a researcher with skills in Nvivo software, SPSS, and Amos.

### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Globally, there are a number of social problems in the world and one of them is poverty. The poverty rates in developing countries like Uganda keep on increasing from 19.7% in 2014 to 27% in 2017. This article describes how such countries can solve these pressing social problems. It examines personal initiative factors that influence social entrepreneurial ventures. Creating such ventures calls for taking a personal initiative approach to solving such problems. People need to be fast to take their initiative (proactive and innovative) in helping curb their own pressing social problems. Governments need to sensitize people that they can solve their own problems if they are self-starters.

We propose that social entrepreneurship includes the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth. This is carried out through creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner. This study extends social entrepreneurial behavior studies in Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in developing countries, especially in Uganda. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate the power of personal initiative in social entrepreneurial venture creation. The present situation in the societies across the world relating to addressing social needs specifically poverty suggests that the insight of social entrepreneurial behavior is pertinent implying that addressing poverty-related issues through social entrepreneurial activities improves the quality of people's lives (Nicotra, Romano, Del Giudice, & Schillaci, 2017). For instance, with the outbreak of Ebola in Liberia between 2014 and 2015 that claimed a number of lives and many people become poorer, there was an outcry for social entrepreneurial activities (World Health Organisation Annual report, 2016). This indicates that social entrepreneurial venture creation is necessary for addressing poverty.

The poverty rate seems to be increasing across the world. In the case of Uganda, the poverty rate is placed at 27% in 2017 from 19.7% in 2014 (Uganda National Bureau of Standards. Annual report (2016/2017); World Bank Annual Report, 2017). Given this situation, the government of Uganda initiated a number of programs such as Prosperity For All (Bonna Baggawale) in 2000, Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in 2000, and Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) in 2013 (MFPED, 2000). A critical look at these programs suggests that they are unable to achieve the desired objectives (Birungi, 2014). This raises concerns about the role of individuals' also known as social entrepreneurs in solving poverty-related problems.

Social entrepreneurs play a unique role in creating world change (Dacin et al., 2010; Von der Weppen & Cochrane, 2012). For instance, Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh founded the popular Grammen bank that enabled women to access loans at low-interest rates, Ibrahim Abouleish of Egypt founded the Sekem project that helped in improving agriculture, and Dr. Moses Musaaazi of Uganda founded Technology for You that enabled the girl child to have access to MakaPads which eased their stay at school. The success recorded by these individuals is as a result of their initiative in dealing with community challenges (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Doherty, Haugh, & Lyon, 2014; Pless, 2012). Suggesting that, the psychological concept of personal initiative plays a crucial role in social venture creation. This has brought about changes to the mainstream of entrepreneurship research around the years 1980–2005, although at some point in time, entrepreneurship research had given up on psychology's usefulness for understanding entrepreneurship (Dakung, Munene, & Balunywa, 2016). Today, in psychological studies, researchers have taken on the personality approach to entrepreneurship (Frese & Fay, 2001; Gartner, 1985; Gartner, Carter, & Reynolds, 2010). Hence, since 1996, when the theory of personal initiative was developed by Frese and colleagues, a considerable body of literature has addressed the concept of personal initiative, focusing much attention on it as a trigger in the process of venture formation and job creation (Dakung et al., 2016; Kuratko, 2005).

To date, the application of personal initiative in the business start-up decisions of social entrepreneurs across the world has been limited particularly in explaining its relationship with social entrepreneurial venture creation. Nineteen years after the appearance of personal initiative theory, few studies (Renko, 2012; Seelos & Mair, 2005) have applied it in predicting social entrepreneurial venture creation. Additionally, those studies are mainly in developed societies, none in Uganda. The scarcity of studies on personal initiative as it predicts social entrepreneurial behavior is somewhat surprising. Upon this backdrop, this study is guided by the following objectives:

- To examine the relationship between personal initiative and social entrepreneurial venture creation among Community-Based Organizations in a developing country.
- To examine the relationship between proactiveness and social entrepreneurial venture creation among Community-Based Organizations in a developing country.

- To examine the relationship between innovation and social entrepreneurial venture creation among Community-Based Organizations in a developing country. The rest of the paper is structured as follows: the next section discusses, the theoretical framework, followed by literature review: Overview of social entrepreneurship in Uganda, social entrepreneurial venture creation, personal initiative, and hypotheses formulation. The next section is methodology where a description of the approach to data collection and analysis is discussed. Thereafter, the results are presented. Finally, conclusions, implications for academicians, policy-makers, and practitioners are presented.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1. Theory of personal initiative

This theory assumes that human beings with certain personal traits are influenced by their environment and the behavior they possess. This is also related to developing initiative (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996). Personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001) is based on the fundamental idea that human beings are not only influenced by their environment but also influence themselves (Frese, Hass, & Friedrich, 2014). It is seen as a behavior syndrome that results in an individual taking an active and self-starting approach to work goals/tasks. These individuals are persistent in overcoming barriers/setbacks in the process of starting social entrepreneurial ventures. It notes that people need to adjust to any social and environmental changes that may occur (Frese & Fay, 2001; Glaub, Frese, Fischer, & Hoppe, 2015). Showing initiative involves acting openly on ideas that come up and have been neglected by others within the community.

In studying social entrepreneurial venture creation, this study utilizes personal initiative which is a behavioral syndrome that results in goal attainment (establishing businesses). Here individuals use their proactive, innovative, persistent, and resilient behaviors (Frese et al., 1996) to create social businesses. This suggests that taking initiative particularly with regards to starting a social venture involves spotting and acting on opportunities by keeping one's mind open to new ideas that other people may not have noticed (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005). Therefore, when social entrepreneurs increase their initiatives, it may result in active pursuance of social entrepreneurial activities. This shows that personal initiative sharpens the way people perceive social needs in the society, decide on the best way to harness resources, and eventually create social ventures. These individuals do not wait to solve reoccurring problems and emerging opportunities but immediately start social ventures that solve people's needs within the community. This links well with Frese (2015) and (Parker, Bindl, and Strauss (2010) who documented that initiative drives entrepreneurial behavior, meaning that entrepreneurs with initiative may create social businesses. This study then looks at the power of personal initiative in enhancing the behaviors of entrepreneurs of Community-Based Organizations in solving social problems in a developing country. In summary, this study contributes to personal initiative theory by providing further insight into the relationship between personal initiative and social entrepreneurial venture creation.

## 3. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 3.1. Overview of social entrepreneurship in a growing economy

Like in most sub-Saharan countries in Africa, social entrepreneurship is still in its infancy. This is not exceptional to Uganda a developing economy, where social entrepreneurial activities started being recognized about eight (8) years ago. For instance, Yunus social enterprise Uganda program started in 2014, Kinawattaka in 2000, and Send A cow in 2009 among others. These programs were aimed at creating social impact within the country. The early social entrepreneurship in Uganda was characterized with identifying where social problems such as poverty most affected. These places were in Kampala, Bwaise, and Iganga communities which also had the biggest population. The social entrepreneurial activities then started at a low pace considering the fact that social entrepreneurs had low resources and little experience to operate this kind of business (Tukamushaba, Orobia, & George, 2011).

The modern form of social entrepreneurship in Uganda started around 2014, with the coming of the foreign social entrepreneurs like Mohammed Yunus (founder of Grammen Bank) who promoted his social entrepreneurship ideologies. Adding to that, Non-Governmental organizations, donor agencies from the United States, Netherlands, Germany, and United Kingdom took interest and supported the crusade by providing finances, establishing schools, hospitals, and vocational centers. They majorly targeted the youth and women as vulnerable and needy groups. In this way, modern social entrepreneurship was conceived. Most of the modern social entrepreneurs were engaged in health care delivery, educating the communities, and providing finances. However, one of the seemingly challenging factors that discouraged social entrepreneurship to flourish at a point in time was the misconception by the Ugandans, particularly those in the villages who viewed social entrepreneurs as promoting their interests. For about 4 months, the community-based organizations (CBOs) and other social entrepreneurs diverted the focus of their activities into massive sensitization to convince the communities of the need to appreciate the benefits associated with their activities. With this campaign, a number of people availed themselves and had the opportunity of coming out of the poverty web (Ferraris & Grieco, 2015), such, a number of CBOs sprang up within a short period of time.

Again the contrast between a growing country and foreign social entrepreneurs is detrimental and the competitive strategy of the foreign social entrepreneurs was going against moral standards established by society. For instance, some NGOs responsible for addressing poverty-related problems among the Ugandan women almost failed to fully associate themselves with the plight of the women. The refusal of the expatriates to fully commit their resources in addressing the poverty of local women inhibited their acceptance by the people and expansion. As a result, the flow of social entrepreneurship in the country was slowed down at a point in time. But, with more people being enlightened and the fact that the Ugandan government felt there was a need to encourage such activities, programs to encourage individuals to go into social entrepreneurship were promoted (Tukamushaba et al., 2011).

The role of government in social entrepreneurship development in Uganda became eminent only in 2015. Around the mid-2015 there has been an increased commitment of the government to social entrepreneurship development especially by providing a platform for international social entrepreneurs like Mohammed Yunus to carry on with the movement. Added to this was the emergence of organizations like Social Entrepreneurs Transforming Africa (SET Africa), International Youth Foundation (IYF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the MasterCard Foundation, housed by Makerere University Business School (MUBS) entrepreneurship center (Birungi, 2014). Fundamentally, the Ugandan government promotes social entrepreneurial culture through initiatives that build confidence, positive attitude, pride in success, support/encouragement of new ideas, social responsibility, inter business linkages. It further promotes activities that will improve peoples' quality of life. With this, in early 2016, a remarkable success was recorded where social entrepreneurship programs were organized at Makerere University Business School. The call for social entrepreneurship in this institution, which has the objective of teaching and encouraging people to acquire social entrepreneurial skills, was institutionalized. The goal was to make everybody create job opportunities for others and also generate wealth.

### **3.2. Social entrepreneurial behavior**

This is a set of activities and practices by which individuals generate and use innovative resource combinations to identify and pursue social opportunities (Mair & Martí, 2006). Social entrepreneurial behavior is also a set of decisions about which opportunity to pursue, how to raise funds, what social organizational form to take, where to obtain further information and support, who to employ on the start-up team, and so on. Social entrepreneurial behavior is used interchangeably with social entrepreneurial venture creation. Individuals identify and exploit these opportunities through creating and developing new social entrepreneurial ventures (Bird & Schjoedt, 2009; Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Tornikoski, 2013). Social Entrepreneurial Behavior emphasizes the importance of refocusing research attention toward concrete and observable human action in venture creation and emergence (Bird, Schjoedt, & Baum, 2012). In this regard, social entrepreneurial ventures have been classified as:

not-for-profit organizations (Leadbeater, 2007), for-profit ventures that define their mission as having a double bottom line (Dees, 1998) and collaborative initiatives engaging non-profit, for-profit and/or public organizations to solve particularly challenging social problems (Bornstein, 2004). In this study, the focus is not on, for-profit organizations because the mission of the founders is purposely to solve social problems in their communities. This then amplifies the relevance of social entrepreneurial venture creation.

### **3.3. Concept of personal initiative**

Promoting a positive mindset toward social entrepreneurship is being emphasized across the globe. This is highlighted by individuals who take initiative. Personal initiative has a number of dimensions which include; innovation, resourcefulness, creativity, dedication, vision, resilience, and optimism among others. It is through times of upheaval that entrepreneurs often take initiative by spotting opportunities in the environment and using their creativity to bring about innovation. This study dwells on proactiveness, innovation, and resilience as they associate with social entrepreneurial venture creation. Today, scholars (Dakung et al., 2016; Frese, 2015) have argued that entrepreneurial behavior is a function of entrepreneurial initiative. Since entrepreneurial initiative is associated with entrepreneurial behavior, its predictive power can be enhanced even in the area of solving social problems, meaning that taking initiative is key to becoming a successful social entrepreneur. This adds to the field of entrepreneurship thereby enabling social entrepreneurs to successfully start their own businesses. Anchoring on the above understanding, this study provides support for the assertions of the Personal Initiative Theory (Frese et al., 1996). The theory prescribes that human beings with self-starting and proactive behaviors will attain certain goals. This is also related to developing initiative and individuals' career plans which can be built through mastery experience. People with personal initiative obtain better results, perform better tasks, are more innovative and entrepreneurial in nature (Frese & Fay, 2001; Krauss, Frese, Friedrich, & Unger, 2003). We, therefore, hypothesize that:

$H_1$ : There is a positive relationship between personal initiative and social entrepreneurial venture creation.

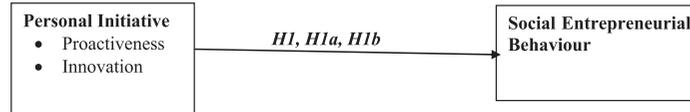
### **3.4. Proactiveness and social entrepreneurial behavior**

This refers to a firm's efforts to seize new opportunities (Lumpkin & Dess, 2001). Proactiveness is also an opportunity seeking, forward-looking perspective involving introducing new products or services ahead competition. It acts in anticipation of the future demand to create change and shape the environment. This is aimed at helping in solving social problems within the society. It involves not only recognizing changes but also willing to act on those insights ahead of the competition (Hughes & Morgan, 2007). A proactive individual has the ability, willingness, and foresight to seize opportunities and in so doing he changes the world and they behave entrepreneurially (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Entrepreneurs can be proactive by shaping the environment; introducing new products and brands in the community that can create social impact. The fast mover can capture unusually high profits and get a head start on establishing brand recognition. Proactiveness helps organizations to seek information and resources to launch social entrepreneurial businesses. Lumpkin and Dess, (2001) suggested that proactiveness leads to increased organizational performance. Individuals with proactive personality identify opportunities and act on them, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful social changes occur (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000).

Proactive people will always have a behavior of starting a new business. (Kraus, Rigtering, Hughes, & Hosman, 2012). Crant (2000) wanted to find out if proactive disposition toward behavior intuitively appeared to be related to entrepreneurship. The results confirmed that proactive personality was positively associated with social entrepreneurial behavioral. Looking at personal initiative theoretical lens, it is consistent with the social entrepreneurship theoretical domain, hence proposing the following hypothesis:

$H1a$ : There is a positive relationship between proactiveness and social entrepreneurial behaviour.

**Figure 1. Conceptual model of the study variables.**



### **3.5. Innovation and social entrepreneurship venture creation**

Innovation leads to new products, markets, processes, services, or procedures (West & Anderson, 1996). The goal of innovation is to bring a positive change. An innovative entrepreneur recognizes and discovers a social opportunity that creates something new (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006). It starts when an individual transforms his/her ideas into something new or improves on an existing product or service, tests it, and implements it. This product or service or process must be aimed at solving a social challenge. A self-starting approach is required by this individual who is trying to find unique solutions to persisting social problems (Tardivo, Santoro, & Ferraris, 2017). Social entrepreneurs are able to produce a large number of unusual and novel ideas (Baron & Ward, 2004; Sternberg, 2004), thereby meeting social needs (Mulgan, 2006). It is not surprising that, innovation has been indicated as a trigger of Social Entrepreneurial venture creation. From their own perspective, Gorman, Hanlon, and King (1997), Feldman and Bolino (2000), and Sternberg (2004) proposed that individuals with a strong innovation anchor and the capacity to think outside the box are motivated to start ventures. Personal Initiative will help solve the challenges that may come up with initiating self-starting processes. It is also a person's influence to launch a social enterprise or venture to advance social change through innovation. High innovation/creativity scores yield a strong positive effect on social entrepreneurial behavior. This then suggests that individual's innovativeness should be incorporated in models of social entrepreneurial venture creation (Hmieleski & Corbett, 2006). Therefore, we hypothesize as follows (Figure 1):

*H1b:* There is a positive relationship between innovation and social entrepreneurial behaviour.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Research design and sample**

This study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive research design to examine the role of personal initiative in influencing the social entrepreneurial behavior of CBOs in Uganda. Also, a descriptive survey with a quantitative method constitutes the study's research design. The quantitative research design incorporated the standardized measures and statistical techniques associated with the positivist's paradigm to obtain in-depth responses about how personal initiative influences owners of community-based organizations' social entrepreneurial behaviors. The total population of the study was 1211 CBOs that were certified by Kampala Capital City Authority between 2015/2016. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table, we targeted 291 respondents but a total of 243 owner managers and some non-entrepreneurs of community-based organizations were drawn. These were the usable responses. These CBOs were chosen because of their concentration in Kampala. The participants were selected using simple random sampling technique after which, data were collected through a personal approach and a response rate of 83% was achieved. The data collection approach was chosen because of the busy nature of our respondents. Additionally, the limited availability and efficiency of postal/communication services in Uganda are unfavorable for questionnaires to be mailed to our respondents. The descriptive statistics reveal that females were more (154) than males (89) and the majority belonging to the 25–31 age bracket. With regard to the years of operation, the majority (46.4%) of the respondents have been in existence for 5 years and above and 55.3% of them have bachelor's qualification. Finally, the majority of the respondents (82.6%) were married.

### **4.2. Operationalization and measurement of variables**

A well-structured questionnaire comprising of standardized items on personal initiative, proactiveness, innovation and social entrepreneurial behavior was distributed among the owners of CBOs for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of statements on a five-point Likert scale varying from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5).

#### 4.2.1. Social entrepreneurial behavior

Question items measuring social entrepreneurial behavior were adapted from Gielnik et al. (2015) and modified to suit the Ugandan context. Items such as “Among the various career options, I will be anything but a social entrepreneur”, “Being a social entrepreneur would give me great satisfaction”, “Being a social entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me”. These were on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Scale reliability, Cronbach alpha value, was calculated as 0.940. This means that our data was reliable.

#### 4.2.2. Personal initiative

*Proactiveness* was assessed using five items, and answered on a five-point Likert scale developed by Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, and Tag (1997) ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This was modified to suit our study since it was used in other countries (Germany and Italy) and on a different set of respondents. The study utilized items such as: “I excel at identifying opportunities” and “No matter what the odds if I believe in something I will make it happen.” Scale reliability was calculated as 0.832.

*Innovation* was also assessed with responses on a five-point scale developed by Ohly and Fritz (2010). Items were modified to suit the setting of this study. A total of 10 items utilized are: “I generate novel ways of establishing/operating the social business”, “Innovation is supported and rewarded in social entrepreneurial ventures”, “I have new and better ideas of marketing to customers”, and “I will serve as a good role model for innovation.” Responses were indicated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Scale reliability, Cronbach alpha value, was calculated as 0.844.

#### 4.3. Control variables

Previous studies have established that age of the organization is significant in predicting entrepreneurial activities (Lévesque & Minniti 2011; Thorgren et al., 2016). In view of that, age was controlled for in this study.

#### 4.4. Data analysis

Data were cleaned, followed by parametric assumptions (diagnostic tests of normality) that is; the linearity of data and homogeneity of variance to explore the data and determine its distribution. As suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the normality of variables enhances the solution and because the numbers of factors are determined using statistical inference, multivariate normality is assumed. Normality by skewness and kurtosis was assessed. According to Field (2009), the values of kurtosis and skewness should be close to zero in a normal distribution. Going by this rule, the data were found to be fairly normally distributed. Additionally, assumptions of homogeneity of variance using the Levene’s test were conducted and this test returns a non-significant value making the homogeneity of variance tenable for the data. Furthermore, no indication of severe multicollinearity was dictated in the specifications—the variance inflation factor (VIF) ranges between 1.20 and 2.13 for the study variables. While a conventional threshold VIF = 10 may be considered too high as argued by Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (2010), the VIFs in the present study are far below this. Further, descriptive statistics were used to determine the sample characteristics.

#### 4.5. Exploratory analysis

The principal components analysis for cleaning of the scales and testing the dimensionality of the constructs as recommended by Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991) and Churchill (1979) was applied. This was done to measure sampling adequacy and relevant axes, we employed the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test, Bartlett’s test of sphericity, and Kaiser’s eigenvalues (Evrard, Pras, & Roux, 1993). During the first iteration, we employed a reliability test ( $\alpha$  of Cronbach) for each scale. We, therefore, removed the items with loadings lower than 0.30 on several factors. Complementarily, we examined the commonalities (cancellation below 0.4). All the values were found to be within acceptable limits (Table 1) in the present study. Hence, no further treatment of data was required. We then went ahead to validate the measurement model.

**Table 1. Factor analysis for key variables**

Item	$\alpha$	Eigen value	Item	Loading	Commonality
Proac2	0.83	1.603	I excel at identifying opportunities	0.873	0.876
Proac3			No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.	0.811	0.769
Proac4			If I see something I don't like, I fix it	0.845	0.764
Proac5			I am always looking for better ways of doing things	0.766	0.853
Innov1	0.84	4.212	I hope to generate novel way of establishing/operating business	0.789	0.851
Innov 2			Innovation is supported and rewarded in business	0.822	0.833
Innov 3			I have new and better ideas for marketing to customers	0.754	0.795
Innov 4			I will serve as a good role model for innovation	0.699	0.763
Seb2	0.94	2.273	Among the various career options, I would be anything but a social entrepreneur	0.871	0.652
Seb3			Being a social entrepreneur would give me great satisfaction	0.786	0.851
Seb4			Being a social entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me	0.901	0.852
Seb5			I search for ideas for business activities	0.783	0.821
Seb6			I would like to be my own boss	0.742	0.876
Seb8			I know how to develop a social entrepreneurial project	0.884	0.769

Notes: Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = .831.  
 Bartlett test for sphericity = 1322.706, df = 56, significance level = .000, % of variance = 63.541.

#### 4.6. Validation of the measurement model

Validating the measurement model consists of a two-step analysis: the first step is a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the measurement model, designed to assess data adjustment to the measurement model and to define and improve the convergent validity and the discriminatory validity of the constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In examining discriminant validity, squared correlations among constructs were compared with the respective average variance extracted (AVE). We employed Fornell and Larcker (1981)'s criteria which suggests that if the squared correlation values among the latent variables are less than the AVE, it is an indication of discriminant validity. The results in Table 2 show that all squared correlations were less than the AVE hence concepts studied are different. The second step is the testing of the relationships between the constructs. We used factor loadings and structural covariance analysis by running a confirmatory factor analysis. Also, we employed the use of SEM to assess the relationship between PI and SEB, to examine the influence of PROAC on CBOs' SEB, and to see whether there is any relationship between INNOV and SEB.

#### 4.7. Confirmatory factor analysis

We executed construct validity test using confirmatory factor analysis; with the aid of AMOS version 22 to assess the extent to which operationalization of a construct does actually measure what theory purports (Anderson & Gerbing, 1998; Sarantakos, 2005). This step involved specifying separate measurement models for PI and SEB. CFA is understood as a more flexible statistical tool than other multivariate techniques because it allows for simultaneous multiple dependent relationships between the variables (Holmes-Smith, Coote, & Cunningham, 2004).

**Table 2. Convergent validity and discriminant validity**

	PI	PROAC	INNOV	SEB
Personal initiative (PI)	(0.587)			
Proactiveness (PROAC)	0.338**	(0.565)		
Innovation (INNOV)	0.372**	0.310**	(0.578)	
Social entrepreneurial behavior (SEB)	0.221**	0.075**	0.284**	(0.624)

**Table 3. Goodness-of-fit results for personal initiative**

Model	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	P	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	Items deleted
PROAC	10.7	8	1.338	0.023	0.963	0.985	0.986	0.032	2
INNOV	33.8	14	2.414	0.000	0.957	0.963	0.959	0.075	1

#### 4.7.1. CFA for personal initiative

The measurement scale for PI after the EFA involves 8 items. The initial CFA results indicated that although the standardized parameter estimates were all significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), the fit-indices were below the acceptable level signifying a poor measurement model fit. This informed a re-specification by iteratively deleting items that did not meet the acceptable criteria. The modification indices (MIs) revealed misspecifications associated with “proac2”, “proac5”, and “innov1”. Five out of 11 items in total were deleted in the final model prior to further analysis. The retained items were significant and had standardized factor loadings higher than the recommended level of 0.50 thus, preserving the meanings of the factors. The results of the initial estimation of the proposed model were acceptable for a well-fitting model. The measurement model is stated in Table 3.

#### 4.7.2. CFA for social entrepreneurial behavior

The measurement scale for SEB after the EFA involves 6 items. The initial CFA results indicated misspecifications associated with “seb4” and “seb8” below the acceptable level, signifying a poor measurement model fit. This was deleted from the model. Concerning the fit of the model, the indicators are adequate. The GFI, TLI, and the CFI are all higher than 0.9 (Table 4). Additionally, the RMSEA satisfies the norms of Hair et al. (2010).

### 5. Results

#### 5.1. Correlations

The results in Table 5 show that personal initiative and social entrepreneurial behavior are positively correlated ( $r = 0.317, p < 0.05$ ), which implies that personal initiative is associated with social entrepreneurial venture creation. The results also show that proactiveness and social entrepreneurial behavior are positively correlated ( $r = 0.231, p < 0.05$ ), which implies that changes in proactiveness are associated with changes in social entrepreneurial behavior. Similarly, innovation and social entrepreneurial behavior are positively correlated ( $r = 0.381, p < 0.05$ ). Implying that changes in innovation are associated with changes in social entrepreneurial behavior. Also, as seen in the table all the constructs had their mean values above the medium point ranging 3.33 to 4.41. The standard deviation which describes the spread or variability of the sample distribution was examined. From the results, the maximum standard deviation was 0.73, which is less than 1 implying that the respondents were very consistent in their opinions as recommended by Hair et al. (2010) and Saunders, Core, Sutcliffe, Lis, and Ashe (2013).

#### 5.2. Evaluation of hypothesized model

The three (3) Hypotheses were tested to examine the influence of personal initiative on social entrepreneurial behavior, proactiveness on social entrepreneurial behavior and innovation on social

**Table 4. Goodness-of-fit results for social entrepreneurial behavior**

Model	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	P	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	Items deleted
SE	10.234	6	1.706	0.041	0.992	0.976	0.974	0.057	2

**Table 5. Correlation results**

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	1	2	3	4	5
Age of business (1)			0.104				
Personal initiative (2)	3.33	0.62	0.198*	1.000			
Proactiveness (3)	4.41	0.50	0.264*	0.216*	1.000		
Innovation (4)	4.37	0.57	0.222*	0.111*	0.288*	1.000	
Social entre. beh (5)	3.89	0.73	0.209*	0.317*	0.231*	0.381*	1.000

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

entrepreneurial behavior. The 3 hypothesized paths were statistically significant as discussed below (Table 6).

*Hypothesis 1: Personal initiative is positively related with social entrepreneurial behavior* Hypothesis H1 examined the relationship between personal initiative and social entrepreneurial behavior. The results show that there is a significant and positive relationship between personal initiative and social entrepreneurial behavior ( $\beta = 0.324$ ,  $t$ -value = 4.324,  $p < 0.05$ ), and thus the hypothesis was supported. This suggests that positive changes in personal initiative are associated with positive changes in the social entrepreneurial behavior of community-based organizations in Uganda (Figure 2).

*Hypothesis 1(a): Proactiveness is positively related with social entrepreneurial behavior* Hypothesis H2 examined the relationship between proactiveness and social entrepreneurial behavior. The results show that there is a significant and positive relationship between proactiveness and social entrepreneurial behavior ( $\beta = 0.462$ ,  $t$ -value = 3.288,  $p < 0.05$ ), and thus the hypothesis was supported. This suggests that positive changes in proactiveness are associated with positive changes in social entrepreneurial behavior of community-based organizations in Uganda.

*Hypothesis 1(b): Innovation is positively related with social entrepreneurial behavior* Hypothesis H3 examined the relationship between innovation and social entrepreneurial behavior. The results show that there is a significant and positive relationship between innovation and social entrepreneurial behavior ( $\beta = 0.563$ ,  $t$ -value = 7.197,  $p < 0.05$ ), and thus the hypothesis was supported. This suggests that positive changes in innovation are associated with positive changes in social entrepreneurial behavior of community-based organizations in Uganda.

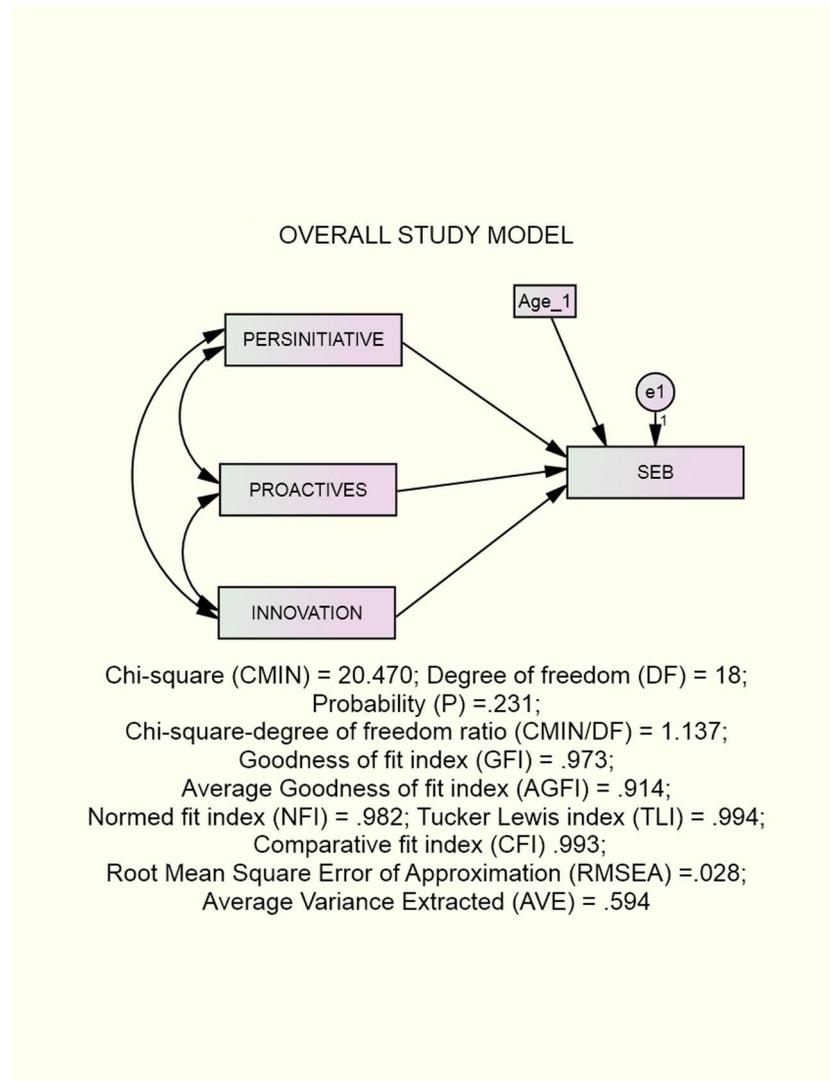
## 6. Discussion and conclusion

The study sought to investigate the influence of personal initiative in predicting social entrepreneurial behavior. The findings revealed a positive and significant association between personal initiative and social entrepreneurial behavioral which lends support to H<sub>1</sub>. This means that the ability of social entrepreneurs to exhibit initiative and develop ideas to help the community enables them to spot social needs, design a business plan and in turn launch social entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, the findings suggest that social entrepreneurs who demonstrate self-starting behavior

**Table 6. Regression results on direct paths**

				B	S.E.	B	t-value	p	Decision
H1	SEB	<---	PI	0.373	0.071	0.324	4.324	***	Yes
H1(a)	SEB	<---	PROAC	0.259	0.059	0.462	3.288	***	Yes
H1(b)	SEB	<---	INNOV	0.549	0.029	0.563	7.197	***	Yes

Figure 2. Overall study model.



take initiative to specify own goals, prepare actions plans, and anticipate opportunities and problems as they register and launch social businesses. A plausible explanation of the study findings could be attributed to the fact that social entrepreneurs in Uganda always use their initiatives in addressing social issues. This is reflected in the case of Dr Musaaazi whose initiative of launching Maka Pads, has helped to reduce the dropout rates of girls in Ugandan secondary schools. The findings are consistent with scholars such as Parker et al. (2010), Frese (2015), and Glaub, Fisher, and Hoppe (2014) who documented that individuals take on different actions of starting social enterprises. This finding also validates Personal Initiative Theory which assumes that individual who take actions immediately achieve set goals like starting a social entrepreneurial business (Frese et al., 1996).

Furthermore, H1(a) was supported which means that positive changes in Proactiveness is associated with social entrepreneurial behavior. The findings suggest that when social entrepreneurs are proactive they, in turn, start a business that solves a social problem. This implies that proactive individuals do not wait for events to take their own course, they instead carry out actions like registering, designing a business plan, launch a business before others thinking of taking any step. In most instances, social entrepreneurs in Uganda are seen to be quick in identifying as well as solving social problems in their communities. This could be seen in Bwaise slums where the community enjoys slums tours, education, and good health on account of the proactiveness of social entrepreneurs in

their community. This finding is consistent with Frese (2015), Glaub et al. (2014) who established that proactive people are the first to take on ideas before others do. They can easily identify what will be done in the future and take on opportunities that have been ignored by others. The study also lends support to Personal Initiative Theory (Frese et al., 1996) which emphasizes proactiveness as a behavioral syndrome that can boost a person to establish social businesses.

Additionally, the findings established that a positive and significant relationship exists between the innovation and social entrepreneurial behavior hence providing evidence to support  $H(b)$  implying that social entrepreneurs who have a keen eye for social needs and problems improve their products, services, processes, and technology as they take active roles in creating businesses that address societal needs and problems. This also means that when they apply new ideas or approaches in their businesses, they solve social problems like poverty and unemployment. These findings link well with the studies conducted by Chor et al. (2015) and Dees (1998) who established a significant relationship between innovation and social entrepreneurial behavioral. An explanation of the study findings is in line with the constant quest by social entrepreneurs in Uganda in search of new and better ways of solving societal problems, especially poverty.

To crown it all individuals, need to take personal initiative to create social entrepreneurial ventures in developing countries.

## 7. Study implications

### 7.1. Theoretical, methodological, and practical

This study dwells on how Personal Initiative theory contributes to theory development in the field of entrepreneurship by empirically investigating personal initiative in predicting social entrepreneurship venture creation of CBOs. The theoretical implication of this study is its contribution to the ongoing social entrepreneurship venture creation debate. From the foregoing, it is observed that understanding how personal initiative predicts social entrepreneurship venture creation of CBOs is key in entrepreneurship. It is upon this backdrop that emphasis ought to be placed on how Ugandan social entrepreneurs will better improve on using their personal initiatives in solving the ever-rising social problems in their local communities

Methodologically, this study provides a precise quantitative methodological process attempting to clearly define each of the underlying constructs like personal initiative and social entrepreneurial behavior, where reliability and validity tests were conducted to purify the measurement scales using confirmatory factor analysis. The results confirmed the correspondence rules between both empirical and theoretical concepts. Thus, using this methodology with the purified measurement items, this study provides a useful direction for future empirical research into social entrepreneurial venture creation.

Finally, the practical (managerial) implication of this study emphasizes that the government should continuously preach positive attitude toward social venture creation. A campaign for people to assure them that they can solve their own problems should be carried out. This will enable individuals to have a positive mind and think of creating social entrepreneurial ventures which will solve many of the societal problems. As they take their personal initiative. Additionally, there should be increased involvement of the government, advocacy groups, NGOs, CBOs to support social entrepreneurial activities through grants, donations, and charity so that the country can easily solve social problems. Another managerial implication relates to providing an enabling environment by the Ugandan government that fosters lifelong social operations for owners of CBOs.

### 7.2. Limitations of the study and areas of further research

The study is restricted to Kampala district in Uganda. Further research could be conducted to cover all the owners of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) across the districts in Uganda. Also, this study employed the cross-sectional approach. A longitudinal approach should be employed to study

the trend over a period of at least three (3) years. Finally, just focusing on personal initiative in predicting social entrepreneurial behavior of CBOs may not be sufficient enough in explaining the phenomenon. Hence, we suggest that scholars should explore other factors such as self-determination, behavioral mechanisms, conditional resources, and entrepreneurship alertness that may contribute in influencing social entrepreneurial behavior of CBOs that were not part of this study.

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#### Author details

Isa Nsereko<sup>1</sup>

E-mail: [insereko@mubs.ac.ug](mailto:insereko@mubs.ac.ug)

ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7452-7054>

Waswa Balunywa<sup>1</sup>

E-mail: [jwbalunywa@hotmail.com](mailto:jwbalunywa@hotmail.com)

John Munene<sup>2</sup>

E-mail: [kigozimunene@mubs.ac.ug](mailto:kigozimunene@mubs.ac.ug)

Laura Orobia<sup>1</sup>

E-mail: [lauraorobia@gmail.com](mailto:lauraorobia@gmail.com)

Ngoma Muhammed<sup>2</sup>

E-mail: [mngoma@mubs.ac.ug](mailto:mngoma@mubs.ac.ug)

<sup>1</sup> Department of Entrepreneurship, Makerere University Business School, Kampala, Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Makerere University Business School, Kampala, Uganda.

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