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Social Entrepreneurship in Africa: Entrepreneurial Action to Create a Better World Together

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship is increasingly recognised as an important community response to catastrophes such as ethnic conflict, social issues such as poverty, inequality, and child labour, and environmental challenges such as waste management and climate change (Saebi, Foss, & Linder, 2019; George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi & Tihanyi, 2016a; Sserwanga et al., 2014). In light of the growing literature on social entrepreneurship, and the size and scale of the African continent, surprisingly few studies have engaged with and explored social entrepreneurship in African countries (Rivera-Santos, Holt, Littlewood, & Kolk, 2015; Zoogah, Peng, & Woldu, 2015; Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009). Our presenter symposium seeks to address two fundamental shortcomings in current organization, management, and entrepreneurship scholarship. First, research in African countries offers the opportunity for greater understanding of how “the diverse, rich life worlds of African people can inform our understanding of management and organization” (AMR, 2021; Kim, Bansal & Haugh, 2019). Second, Africa has been recognized as an important and fertile ground for critically evaluating the relevance of Western theories in non-Western contexts (Nkomo, 2017; Zoogah et al., 2015). Specifically, the learnings derived from a better understanding of how African communities organize local responses to local needs creates opportunities for new insights into how social entrepreneurship seeks to create a better world for communities.

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