# Organisational Capabilities and Replicating Successful Programs Designed to Empower Poor Youths: A Correlational Study

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Abstract: This article reports on the investigated relationship between the organisational capabilities of vouth-serving non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. The data used in this study were obtained from 187 youthserving NGOs in Nigeria registered with the Nigeria Network of Non-Governmental Organisations, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations (Edo State chapter), the Civil Society for HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (Edo State chapter) and the National Youth Council of Nigeria (Edo State chapter). Pearson's correlation r was used to examine the relationship between the research variables and a positive relationship was found between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths. In addition, regression analysis was used to determine the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs that predicted the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria, and it was found that adequate staffing, alliance-building, lobbying, replication and stimulating market forces significantly predicted the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that appropriate measures be put in place by managers of youth-serving NGOs to ensure that the main predictors of the replication. Of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths are adequate to aid successfully in the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria while also giving adequate attention to other organisational capabilities contained in the SCALERS model.

**Keywords:** Nigeria; organisational capabilities; SCALERS model; youth poverty alleviation; youth-serving NGOs

#### 1. Introduction

Solving today's social challenges requires adequate organisational capabilities on which social sector organisations can rely to have the desired social outcome in the society. An increasing number of social sector organisations rely on diverse organisational capabilities to contribute positively to the alleviation of societal issues (Adele, 2015; Kim, 2011; Tchouakeu, Maldonado, Zhao, Robinson, Maitland, & Tapia, 2011). Organisational capabilities are "the socially complex routines that determine the efficiency with which firms physically transform inputs into outputs" (Collis, 1994, p. 145). Some examples of organisational capabilities are staffing, communication, alliance-building, lobbying, earnings-generation replication and stimulating market forces (Bloom & Smith, 2010). Although extensive academic studies has investigated organisational capabilities in relation to several organisational outcomes, such as customer value creation (Martelo, Barroso & Cepeda, 2013), competitive advantages and capacity of organisations to respond to internal and external change (Inan & Bititci, 2015) and profitability (López-Cabarcos, Göttling-Oliveira-Monteiro & Vázquez-Rodríguez, 2015), much less research has investigated organisational capabilities in relation to social outcomes (Bloom & Smith, 2010).

The importance of organisational capabilities in enabling social sector organisations alleviate social issues in society suggests the need for more studies to focus on the relationship between organisational capabilities and social outcomes. This need is shown in the context of youth poverty alleviation in Nigeria. The activities of youth-serving NGOs in Nigeria in the areas of –healthcare services (HIV/AIDS intervention) (Ajowun, Titiloye, & Oshiname, 2015; Isiugo-Abanihe, Olajide, Nwokocha, Fayehun, Okunola, & Akingbade, 2015); education and training services (Alabi, Bahah, & Alabi, 2014; Oshadare, Ige, & Lawal, 2015); financial services (microcredit lending services) (Eneji, Obim, Otu, & Ogli, 2013); women development services (Omofonmwan & Odia, 2009; Oyelude & Bamigbola, 2013) and vocational training (Bello, Danjuma, & Adamu, 2007) have become very important as Nigeria battles with increasing cases of youth poverty (Adedokun, & Oluwag bohunmi, 2014; Adisa, 2013; Aiyedogbon & Ohwofasa, 2012; Curtain, 2003); and the negative consequences associated with youth poverty such as crime (Ajaegbu, 2012; Ayegba, 2015; Onuoha, 2014); youth homelessness (Edewor, 2014); and illegal migration (Okafor, 2012).

It is important to add that previous studies on the activities of youth-serving NGOs in Nigeria have revealed that, in their attempt to alleviate youth poverty in Nigeria, youth-serving NGOs have several organisational capability challenges with regard to –staffing (Aransiola, 2013; Iwuchukwu, Nwankwo, & Igbokwe, 2014); communication (Nwogu, 2014); alliance-building (Kasali, Ahmad, & Ean, 2015); lobbying (Momoh, Oluwasanu, Oduola, Delano, & Ladipo,2015); earnings-generation (Aransiola, 2013; Oyelude, & Bamigbola, 2013); replication (Adepoju & Oyesanya, 2014; Mac-Ikemenjima, 2005; Ohize & Adamu, 2009); and stimulating market forces (Akpan, Patrick, James, & Agom, 2015). Furthermore, organisational capability challenges may hinder the capacities of youth-serving NGOs to replicate successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria and to fight youth poverty in Nigeria, as evidence from various studies show certain problems that negatively affect the fight to alleviate youth poverty in Nigeria by youth-serving NGOs, namely: inadequate staffing (Aransiola, 2013); insufficient funding (Nwogu, 2014); poor communication (Nwogu, 2014); reduced support from development partners (Kasali et al., 2015); and a lack of capacity to negotiate with government (Momoh et al., 2015).

Based on the importance of the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs in the fight to alleviate youth poverty in Nigeria, there is a need to ascertain and understand the actual relationship between organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths to maximise the potential of youth-serving NGOs to alleviate the suffering of deprived youths in Nigeria. The main purpose of this study was to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the SCALERS model (see Bloom & Smith, 2010) by investigating the relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria using the SCALERS model as a theoretical framework. In order to achieve the study aim, the following were the core research questions to which extent is there a positive relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs (as contained in the adapted SCALERS model) and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths?

To which extent are the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs (as contained in the adapted SCALERS model) able to predict the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria? More specifically, this study had three objectives to replicate Bloom and Smith's (2010) study in a Nigeria context (a developing country), specifically in a previously unexplored social organisation context, namely youth-serving NGOs. Youth poverty alleviation, and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria to determine the extent to which there exists a positive relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes. Designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria and to determine the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs, which predict the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. This study built on the SCALERS model by extending the applicability of the SCALERS model to investigate the relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria for the first time using a developing country context.

Furthermore, this article contributes to increasing the number of articles reporting on studies dedicated to the replication of successful voluntary sector initiatives as Mulgan (2006, p. 159) notes that few studies have been dedicated to discourse on replicating successful voluntary sector initiatives. This study focused on youth-serving NGOs as the unit of analysis and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths. As the social outcome because a previous study by Bloom and Smith (2010) applied the SCALERS model to investigate the organisational capabilities of social entrepreneurial organisations to scale social outcome resulting in the need to ascertain the wider applicability of the SCALERS model to other social sector organisations and their target social outcomes. The article has four parts. First, it reports on the SCALERS model as the theoretical framework for the study, and presents previous studies related to organisational capabilities and several outcomes targeted by organisations. Then the research methodology is presented which is followed by the results and discussion. The article concludes with recommendations emerging from the study.

### 2. Literature Review

This section presents the literature review for the study.

Theoretical Literature: This study adapted the SCALERS model by Bloom and Smith (2010) to investigate the relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. This was done due to existing gaps in literature focusing on the issues experienced by youth-serving NGOs in their pursuit to alleviate youth poverty in Nigeria, and existing gaps in literature focusing on the relationship between organisational capabilities and several business outcomes. According to Bloom and Chatterji (2009, p. 115), there are "seven proposed drivers or organisational capabilities that can encourage the successful scaling by a social entrepreneurial organisation". These organisational capabilities are "staffing, communication, alliance building, lobbying, earnings-generation, replication and stimulating market forces", represented by the SCALERS acronym (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009, p. 115). Furthermore, the proposed relationship between the organisational capabilities contained in the SCALERS model and the scale of social impact (see Figure 1) (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009) has been confirmed by Bloom and Smith (2010). The present study, having adapted the SCALERS model, sought to explore the relationship between the organisational capabilities contained in the SCALERS model and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths (see Figure 2).

**Hypotheses Development:** In developing the hypotheses for this study, the measurement of the SCALERS constructs and the scale of the social impact construct in the empirical test of the SCALERS model by Bloom and Smith (2010) were adapted and subsequently used in this study (see Figure 1 & 2). The SCALERS constructs were the independent variables, while the scale of social impact was the dependent variable for the empirical test of the SCALERS model by Bloom and Smith (2010).

## The Following were the Research Hypotheses Formulated for this Study:

- H1: Staffing is positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H0: Staffing is not positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H2: Communication is positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H0: Communication is not positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H3: Alliance-building is positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H0: Alliance-building is not positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H4: Lobbying is positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H0: Lobbying is not positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H5: Earnings-generation is positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H0: Earnings-generation is not positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H6: Replicating is positively related to the dissemination of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H0: Replicating is not positively related to the dissemination of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.
- H7: Stimulating market forces is positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.

H0: Stimulating market forces is not positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths.

**Materials:** The instrument utilised for this study was a self-administered questionnaire adapted from the SCALERS model exploratory study by Bloom and Smith (2010, pp. 144–145). The research instrument contained 28 questions that had to be rated on a 5-point Likert type scale used to measure the perceptions of youth-serving NGOs of their organisational capabilities and replicating successful programmes designed to empower poor youths. Informed consent forms were used to obtain the research participants' consent to participate in the study.

Staffing

Communication

Alliance-Building

Lobbying

EarningsGeneration

Replication

Stimulating market forces

Figure 1: SCALERS Model by Bloom and Smith (2010)

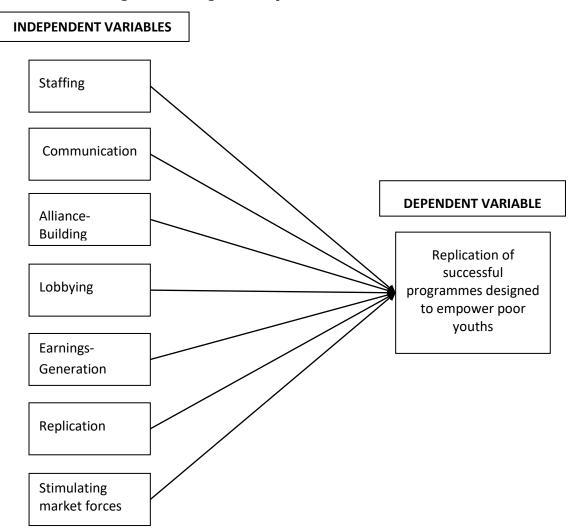
Source: Bloom and Smith (2010)

**Data Collection:** The data were collected at locations where youth-serving NGOs held scheduled association meetings. The first location where the research data were obtained involved the NNNGO via a conference themed 'Global good practices in NGO regulations', which was held on 9 December 2015 in Lagos, Nigeria. Furthermore, meetings of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations (CONGO) (Edo State chapter), the Civil Society for HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (CiSHAN) (Edo State chapter) and the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN) (Edo State chapter), which had youth-serving NGOs in large attendance, were held. A total 187 completed research questionnaires were returned after issues of improperly filled-out questionnaires

had been addressed, indicating a response rate of 95.4%, which was very good for the study (see Baruch & Holtom, 2008, pp. 1141, 1155).

**Data Analysis:** The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 for Windows was used for the analysis and presentation of the research data. Pearson's correlation r was used to test the relationship between replicating successful programmes designed to empower poor youths and the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs. In addition, regression analysis was used to determine the independent variables (organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs) that predicted the dependent variable (replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths). The choice of Pearson's correlation r and regression analysis was based on the research data satisfying the criteria for parametric tests, and these criteria were interval scale variables (dependent and independent). As recommended by Cohen et al. (2013, p. 415) and Sekaran (2003, p. 394), and a large sample size of above 30 research participants as recommended by Elliot and Woodward (2007, pp. 26–27, p. 57) and Pallant (2007, p. 295). Additional justification for the choice of Pearson's correlation r and regression analysis was based.

Figure 2: Adapted SCALERS Model for the Organisational Capabilities of Youth-Serving NGOS to Replicate Successful Programmes Designed to Empower Poor Youths



Source: Bloom and Smith (2010) (adapted)

Empirical Literature: Notable studies (see Lau, Man & Chow, 2004; López-Cabarcos et al., 2015; Van Oppen & Brugman, 2009) have shown that organisational capabilities in different organisations are correlated with several outcomes, such as business performance and social influence. Regarding the effect of organisational capabilities on business performance, Zehir and Acar (2006), using a survey, examined organisational capabilities and their effect on business performance. They found that increasing the level of organisational capabilities had a positive effect on business performance. In addition, Bloom and Smith (2010) considered the drivers of social entrepreneurial effect using the SCALERS model. They found that staffing, communication, alliance-building, lobbying, earnings-generation, replication and stimulating market forces were positively related to the scaling of social outcomes. The present study investigated the relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria.

#### 3. Methodology

This section presents the research methodology for the study.

**Study Population and Sampling:** The population for this study comprised youth-serving NGOs. According to the Nigeria Network of Non-Governmental Organisations (NNNGO) (a private organisation that has a database of NGOs, which is based in Lagos, Nigeria), there were approximately 400 active and registered youth-serving NGOs in December 2015 in Nigeria. The reason for the selection of youth-serving NGOs for this study was based on a gap in the SCALERS model literature that focused solely on social entrepreneurial organisations and scaling social entrepreneurial impact in the United States of America (Bloom & Smith, 2010). This study extended the applicability of the SCALERS model by re-contextualising the SCALERS model by focusing on youth-serving NGOs and replicating successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to gain access to the NGOs. The study utilised Cohen, Mani on (p. 104) table on sample size for a defined population figure to determine the sample size for the research population of 400 youth-serving NGOs available for the study from the sampling frame provided by the NNNGO. The sample contained 196 youth-serving NGOs based on the 95% confidence level and the 5% margin of error. The choice for the selection of sample size of 196 youth-serving NGOs was based on the confidence level and the confidence interval required to achieve the results needed to reflect the perceptions of the target population of 400 youth-serving NGOs accurately as recommended by Cohen et al. (2013).

**Study Design:** This study adopted a non-experimental and correlational research design as it considered the relationship between replicating successful programmes designed to empower poor youths and the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs. The variables in this study were organisational capabilities (independent variables) as contained in the SCALERS model, and replicating successful programmes designed to empower poor youths (dependent variable). On the usage of the tests by scholars such as Bloom and Smith (2010, p. 128) and Zehir and Acar (2006, pp. 168–169), who applied the tests to investigate the relationship between organisational capabilities and business performance and scaling of social effect.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis of results and a discussion of Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of the testing of the research hypotheses and regression analysis of the independent variables (organisational capabilities) that predicted the dependent variable (replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths).

**Pearson's Correlation R Results:** As seen in Table 1, an increase in the effectiveness of the staffing (r=0.498, p < 0.0005), communication (r=0.469, p < 0.0005), alliance-building (r=0.444, p < 0.0005), lobbying (r=0.426, p < 0.0005), earnings-generation (r=0.292, p < 0.0005), replication (r=0.426, p < 0.0005), and stimulating market forces (r=0.408, p < 0.0005) capabilities of youth-serving NGOs reflected a positive influence on the increase in the capacity of youth-serving NGOs to replicate successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. These findings indicate that the null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) for hypotheses 1 to 7 were rejected. This means that the organisational capabilities contained in the SCALERS model and investigated in this study were positively related to the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor

youths in Nigeria. These findings overall suggest that the staffing, communication, alliance-building, lobbying, earnings-generation, replication and stimulating market forces capabilities of youth-serving NGOs as contained in the SCALERS model play a significant role in the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria (Igbinakhase, 2017). Furthermore, the weak positive significance in the relationship between earnings-generation and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in this study might be explained by the fact.

That a significant number of youth-serving NGOs (M=2.56, SD=1.058), t (186) = -5.737, p < 0.0005) indicated that, at the time of this research, they did not have a sustainable income from products and services that they offered at a price. This was unlike their social entrepreneurship counterparts in the study carried out by Bloom and Smith (2010), who were able to realise income from products and services that they offered at a price. Lastly, the implication of the results of the hypotheses testing carried out on all seven hypotheses was that improvement of the staffing, communication, alliance-building, earnings-generation, replication and stimulating market forces capabilities of youth-serving NGOs will be beneficial in the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths. As result of this implication, youth-serving NGOs should endeavour to resolve their – staffing (Aransiola, 2013; Odukoya, Busari, & Ateh-Abang, 2006); communication (Nwogu, 2014); alliance-building (Kasali et al., 2015); lobbying (Momoh et al., 2015). Earnings-generation (Aransiola, 2013; Oyelude & Bamigbola, 2013); replication (Adepoju & Oyesanya, 2014; Nwogu, 2014; Patrick & Ijah, 2012; Samuels, Blake & Akinrimisi, 2012); and stimulating market forces challenges (Akpan et al., 2015) in time in order to achieve their youth poverty alleviation goals in society.

Table 1: Hypothesis Testing Using Pearson's Correlation R

		RSPDEPY	Staffing	Communication	Alliance- building	Lobbying	Earnings- generation	Replication	Stimulating market forces
RSPDEPY*	Pearson's correlation	1	0.498**	0.469**	0.444**	0.426**	0.292**	0.444**	0.408**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187

<sup>\*</sup> RSPDEPY = replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths

Source: Author's own compilation

**Regression Analysis:** As seen in Table 2, the seven predictors (independent variables) explained 44.1% of the variance ( $R^2$ =0.441, F (7,169) = 20.160, p < 0.0005). As a result, it was found that adequate staffing significantly predicted the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths ( $\beta$ =0.117, p=0.043), as did alliance-building ( $\beta$ =0.188, p=0.000), replication ( $\beta$ =0.113, p=0.034), lobbying ( $\beta$ =0.138, p=0.009) and stimulating market forces ( $\beta$ =0.180, p=0.001). These findings overall suggest that a major boost in the staffing, alliance-building, lobbying, replication and stimulating market forces capabilities of youth-serving NGOs would significantly improve the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths to alleviate youth poverty in Nigeria (Igbinakhase, 2017). The results of this study bring new empirical evidence to the literature, which is consistent with the argument that organisational capabilities have the potential to influence the capacity of an NGO to scale for social outcomes in addition to social enterprises (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009; Bloom & Smith, 2010).

In addition, this study brings new empirical evidence in the percentage of variance (namely 44.1%) explained by the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs in the replication of successful programmes designed. To empower poor youths in Nigeria for seven organisational capabilities as contained in the SCALERS model in addition to the study by Bloom and Smith (2010), which showed that the SCALERS model accounted for "38% of the variance in the scaling of social impact" (Bloom & Smith, 2010, p. 140). Lastly, when all the SCALERS are combined in the model used in this study, communication and earnings-generation became unimportant. This is because NGOs in general in Nigeria are known to be non-profit-focused with

<sup>\*\*</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

respect to their earnings-generation capability, while, with respect to their communication capability, the youth-serving NGOs may have operated in an environment where additional communication with key stakeholders would not lead to improved communication outcomes. This brings new empirical evidence to the literature. This finding is inconsistent with the findings by Bloom and Smith (2010) that alliance building and lobbying became irrelevant when the SCALERS were combined in a model. This may suggest that investigations of organisational capabilities for NGOs in the scale of specific social outcomes may indicate different unimportant organisational capabilities when all the SCALERS are combined in the model as opposed to what was found in the exploration of the SCALERS model by Bloom and Smith (2010).

Table 2: Regression Analysis to Determine the Independent Variables that Predicted the Dependent Variable

	Un Standardiz coefficients	ed	Standardis coefficient		
	В	Std. error	Beta	T	Sig.
Constant	0.967	0.253		3.827	0.000
Staffing	0.117	0.057	0.159	2.041	0.043
Communication	0.124	0.068	0.136	1.825	0.070
Alliance-building	0.188	0.053	0.227	3.568	0.000
Lobbying	0.138	0.052	0.175	2.652	0.009
Earnings-generation	-0.100	0.052	-0.139	-1.928	0.055
Replication	0.113	0.053	0.151	2.132	0.034
Stimulating market forces	0.180	0.052	0.235	3.439	0.001

Note: Dependent variable: replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths

Source: Author's own compilation

#### 5. Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths using the SCALERS model as a theoretical framework. It also determined the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs that predicted the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria. Using Pearson's correlation r and regression analysis the study found that the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs were positively correlated with the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths and that adequate staffing, alliance-building, lobbying, replication and stimulating market forces capabilities of youth-serving NGOs will result in the improvement of the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths to alleviate youth poverty in Nigeria.

It is recommended that, as youth-serving NGOs tackle the issue of the growing scourge of youth poverty in Nigeria, appropriate measures must be put in place by managers of youth-serving NGOs to ensure that the main predictors of the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths which are staffing, alliance-building. Lobbying, replication and stimulating market forces capabilities are adequate to aid the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria successfully while also giving adequate attention to other organisational capabilities contained in the SCALERS model. Such measures, when implemented, will enable youth-serving NGOs to have adequate organisational capabilities to achieve their organisational goals in society.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research: The first limitation of the study was that the data were obtained from youth-serving NGOs in Nigeria and as a result, the generalisation of the research findings is limited to Nigeria and youth-serving NGOs in Nigeria. The second limitation was that the capabilities of youth-serving NGOs investigated in this study were limited to independent variables in the SCALERS model (staffing, communication, alliance-building, lobbying, earnings-generation, replication and stimulating market forces), while the dependent variable was the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths. As a result, there may be other organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs that may be correlated with the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths. The third limitation was that the alliance-building and earnings-generation measurement scales both had low internal

consistency reliability based on the benchmarked Standards of acceptable reliability for this study (namely 0.492 < 0.7 and 0.678 < 0.7 respectively). Which could not be improved by deleting items, as the researcher relied on the "meaningful content coverage of some domain and reasonable unidimensionality of the measure", as suggested by Schmitt (1996, p. 352). The researcher satisfactorily managed these limitations to achieve the research objectives. Future research is needed to establish other organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs that may influence the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria, as this study had established the correlation between the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs and the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths, and also that the organisational capabilities of youth-serving NGOs in the adapted SCALERS model accounted for 44.1% of the variance in the replication of successful programmes designed to empower poor youths in Nigeria.

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