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The strategy – resource configurations and performance implications in Nongovernmental Organizations

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Configurations are composed of organizational elements that render certain outcomes collectively rather than individually. This study set out to establish the implications of strategy and resource configurations on performance of Nongovernmental organizations. We tested for strategy with the sub variables of resources as predictors of performance in the tangible and intangible sub domains. Using interaction terms, results revealed that different configuration settings rendered into various performance outcomes. Strategy –tangible resource models had high coefficients but were not significant in predicting tangible, intangible and main performance. On the contrary strategy – intangible resources were significant with other domains save with intangible performance. The three way interaction term was not significant although with high prediction power across the performance variables. We conclude that configuration approach offers promise in better understanding of the performance of NGOs. The study outcomes have rich insights for both scholars and practitioners. We recommend further empirical examinations of strategy elements in the NGO sector.

Key words: Strategy, Resources, Configurations, Performance, Nongovernmental organizations, Intangible resources, Tangible resources

Introduction

There is a growing bundle of empirical literature on the configuration approach in studying organizational elements. However such studies in nonprofit organizations have still been limited. Nonprofit organizations for not being engaged with market forces and competition were believed to be an inappropriate context for testing strategy models. It is however pertinent that nonprofits, particularly nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have to identify community needs and devise means for effective service delivery. They are engrossed in decisions on what resources they require, from where and how to apportion them so as to achieve their desired goals. Therefore to understand their performance better there is need to study how strategy and resource decisions are coalesced than looking at each factor in isolation. The clustering of organizational elements or domains to render certain outcomes is the basis of the configurational theory in strategic management. This article investigates strategy,

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resources, their configurations and implication on predicting performance in nongovernmental organizations.

The stream of literature on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) is grounded in the social-economic realm. The studies that have made empirical tests of strategy models in this sector and particularly in the developing economies are not many. In Uganda the NGO sector has widely grown in the past twenty years or so. NGOs have become active players across the country in various sectors. They have strategic goals that they pursue; they are continuously involved in identifying and selecting community needs to provide for. Their key preoccupation is to mobilize resources required to provide for their selected beneficiaries. From the implementation of their chosen programs they expect to achieve performance through clear indicators. In the recent years however, stakeholders have questioned the performance of NGOs. These salient strategic matters have not had wide scholarly inquiry. This paper contends that NGO performance has come under public scrutiny based on isolated factors and a superior explanation will be provided using the configurational approach.

Stakeholders insinuate that NGOs have vast resources yet their performance is wanting. On the other hand NGO managers point out that they are working according to their strategies and are achieving their goals despite inadequate resources and enormous social needs. Without empirical studies to explain NGO strategies and resources it is difficult to have a clear position of these phenomena. The few local studies that have been conducted on NGOs were exploratory focused on governance, collaboration, government policies, regulatory mechanism and accountability (Gugerty, 2010; Namara, 2009; Abigail et al., 2004). Accusations leveled against NGOs in Uganda include lack of transparency, corruption, sub-standard services to beneficiary communities, diversion of funds, competition, unrealistic reports, evading taxes using non-profit status, huge operational costs benefiting more of managers than clients, among others. Studies elsewhere in the world have also noted similar contentions against NGOs (Akbar, 1999; Bendel, 2006; Fowler, 1991). Ugandan NGOs themselves have acknowledged the calls for accountability and concerns of stakeholders on the poor performance. Players have been called upon to document their activities so that the role of the sector towards the health and wealth of the nation is not in any doubt. They have recently committed to pursue strategic and long term agenda beyond legislative reforms to improve their public image (NGO Forum Briefing paper, 2009). Thus a scholarly investigation of these issues was needed to shade some light on the phenomena in NGOs.

Conceptual analysis

Configurations are defined in strategy literature as the constellations of organizational elements that are pulled together by unifying them. They are the commonly occurring clusters of elements that render certain outcomes. Configurations of variables represent their specific and separate attributes which are meaningful collectively rather than individually (Miller & Friesen, 1978; Meyer et al., 1993; Ketchen et al., 1993; Dess et al., 1993). The configuration of factors enables researchers to identify underlying relationships that render certain outcomes. Strategic configurations are constituted by both formal and informal patterns of combinations, forming blends of decisions and actions (Miller, 1986; Miller, 1987c). According to Miller and Whitney (1999) configurations arise out of insight, chance, inspiration and or trial and error. In recent extant strategy literature, the study of configurations forms a central pillar of researchers to express complicated and interrelated relationships among domains and elements. Meyer et al. (1993) posited that configurations enable researchers to explain the multidimensionality of constructs used to describe strategy phenomena. Snow et al. (2005) expressed concerns that having made progress earlier, configuration approach had stalled and was riddled with lack of a consistent language and operationalization.

The conceptualization of the strategy concept in various contexts especially nonprofit organizations still eludes scholars. Rather than attempting to derive new meanings and application, Ketchen et al. (1997) recommended replication studies and adopting potentially promising models like the Miles and Snow (1978) typology, Mintzerberg's (1978) classification, etc. Brown and Iverson (2004) agreed that instead of starting anew to explore strategy formulation, content and implementation, it was best to consider existing theories in multiple contexts. They used the Miles and Snow typology to explore strategy and board structure in nonprofits. Desarbo et al. (2005) used the same framework to study strategic types, environmental uncertainties and performance in nonprofits.

Harris et al. (2009, p416) argued that among development NGOs the use of the term strategy was infused to their programs or engagements, simply leading to 'strategic ambiguity' and eventually 'strategic drifts' of slow unguided transition from their 'strategic thrusts'. Thus for NGOs operating in highly institutionalized environments, strategies frequently lost a lot of their sense. This strategic ambiguity is highlighted by Berthoud (2001) who posited that in the 1990's many NGOs were subjected to tensions after studies could not demonstrate that they were close to the poor or as effective as they were believed to be. This led to budget cuts and many NGOs were made to rethink their strategies, engagements and planning models. Their institutional imperatives of searching for immediate results seemed not to align with the developments in creating a long lasting impact in the communities. These

events arise from the lack of a common understanding of the legitimacy, set up and role of NGOs, and thus their strategy fits.

NGO Researchers have contended with the different meanings attached to the sector as non state actors, voluntary organizations, civil society organisations and third sector; community based organizations, associations and foundations (Hudson & Bielfeld, 1997; Miller, 1986; Tvedt, 2006; Gugerty et al., 2010). There are nonprofits that receive funding or are close to government as a sub-sector, namely corporations, hospitals, trade unions and consumer organizations. According to Hudson & Bielfeld (1997) the criteria should base on non distribution of profits, provision of services for common good, voluntarily funded and exhibiting value rationality. Conversely Tvedt (2006) argued that the whole NGO phenomenon needs to be reconceptualized. Jordon (2005) has indicated that NGOs have replaced some roles played by the state and grown in size and scale to rival governments and UN agencies. However, Davies (2008) posited that the growth of the sector has not been linear as widely believed; it has had rises and falls. Growth of NGOs has been facilitated by post war recovery, economic emancipation, technological innovations, degree of unity among nations and the nature of civil society itself. Since the end of the cold war in the west and with rising political conflicts in Africa, NGOs have continued to increase in number to respond to social challenges across the world. There are also increasing need for global campaigns like climate change, terrorism, disarmament, landmine abolition and HIV/AIDS.

The major rationale of NGO programs is to reflect and facilitate a social engagement for people on matters of common concern, stimulate political awareness and stimulate development. Beamon and Balcik (2008) posited that NGOs have two major areas of focus, namely relief and development. Since the early 1990's many NGOs have engaged in policy advocacy, though they keep changing into diverse issues like environmental protection, debt management, hunger, deforestation. The World Bank report of 1995 cited by Akbar (1999) outlined NGO strategies to be based on strong grass root links, innovation and adaptation, process oriented approach to development, participatory methods and tools, cost effectiveness and long term commitment with sustainability.

Researchers are reluctant to draw conclusions on NGO resource capabilities. Akbar (1999) indicated that the resource capability of NGOs had waned. Tvedt (2006) observed that some NGOs owe they resource capability to the state, where governments have paid NGOs to do work they did not want to as the functional necessity was to bridge state failure. Ironically this development has raised a lot of concerns in view of some definitions of NGOs as non state actors (Lewis, 2007). Edwards & Hulme (1996) attempted to explain the resource

predicament faced by NGOs as arising from the declining donor funds. Many researchers have been unsuccessful in establishing the real financial capacity of NGOs and thus conclusions on their resources is still under debate (Abigail et al., 2005; Lewis 2007; Bendel, 2006).

Gaskin (1999) argued that the resource issues can be understood by looking at the declining public confidence and trust in civil society, leading to fundraising difficulties. Salamon and Anheier (1996, in Abigail et al., 2005) were unable to find accurate comparative figures on non financial capabilities of NGOs. Abigail (2005) established that NGOs had highly skilled human resource capacity. Another dimension to understand NGO resources is in terms of contacts and membership. Brainard and Siplon (2002) noted that NGOs with registered members were assured of revenues through fees, subscriptions and contributions. Littlefield (2010) on the other hand observed group membership to church civil society organizations in terms of congregations who widely contribute towards the services offered to the poor. NGOs also use their networks with businesses to raise funds to distribute to the needy. Through their advocacy programs they appeal for support from individuals, government and donor agencies. Tvedit (2006) posited that the successes in such kind of networks have led to advocacy groups within which the flow and sharing of resources is prominent. Littlefield (2010) noted that the phenomenon of social capital in the sector is not well explained though it is understood to lead to social, cultural and economic resources.

Performance measurement in NGOs has recently attracted great attention lending the debate as inconclusive. Performance is a multidimensional construct. In NGOs, it continues to puzzle scholars. Unlike in the profit organizations, performance here is composed of the intangibility of services, unknowable outcomes and the variety of interests among the many stakeholders. Beamon and Balcik (2008) argued that stakeholders are asking whether NGOs practice what they preach. Herman and Renz (1998) and Siciliano (1997) proposed objective indicators like mission statements, reports, independent financial audits, operational manuals, human resource capability, community acceptance, stakeholder satisfaction, programs and fundraisings. This insinuated that performance should be examined in both tangible and intangible indicators. Nettings and Williams (1997) posited that performance of NGOs should be seen in sustainability more than other measures, such as restructuring their roles, enhancing community connections, modeling collaborations and running cross fertilizing projects. In the wake of donor requirements, many NGO activities which are not quantifiable get lost in logical frameworks. There are questions on how programs like advocacy can be measured and the resources used accounted for. Edwards and Hulme (1996) posited that NGOs' attempt to provide

accountability may never be adequate to satisfy the stakeholders. It is therefore possible that NGO performance has been misunderstood by looking at isolated factors mainly the tangible indicators.

With the unwavering debate on the issues of strategy, resource and performance looking at them in isolation may be misleading. Not many studies have explored the strategy-resource relationship and performance in NGOs. In other contexts studies have established relationships between strategy, structure, environment, resources and performance (Ritchie & Kolodnisky, 2003; Casselman & Samson, 2007; Harris et al., 2009). Performance emerged as the well-regarded dependent variable. Crook et al. (2008) thus proposed working backwards from performance to any of these variables to test their interdependences, in view of establishing the configurations. This proposition has not been given wide empirical attention regarding strategy and resources. Howard & Walters (2004) had explored strategy – performance and found strong relationship. Carmeli and Tishler (2004) studied intangible resources – performance while Manikkuty (2000) tested resources – environment changes. Rugman & Vebeke (2002) and Kor & Mahoney (2005) emphasized the foundation of resources and the linkage to strategy. Ritchie & Kolodnisky (2003) found out that different strategies of non-profits were associated with different levels of performance while Roller (1996) noted that resources were among the factors that determined strategy.

Drawing on Dess et al.'s (1993) posting that configurations are a representation of separate attributes that are meaningful collectively within domains and sub domains, we focused on strategy with the sub variables of resources and performance. This choice of what to study in configurations is supported by Newcomb and Bentler (1988) when they advised that antecedents and consequences are a matter of the researcher's frame of reference and focus. Configuration involves modeling organizational complexities through isolating key constructs. Thus parsimony is achieved through studying variables and the influence of their sub domains. We contended that looking at resources and performance in whole could have been misleading to stakeholders.

We thus developed the following hypotheses to guide the inquiry.

H1a. Strategy and resources will be significantly associated with performance.

H1b.Strategy, tangible resources and intangible resources will be significantly associated with performance sub variables namely tangible and intangible performance.

H2. Strategy will have a higher prediction of performance than tangible or intangible resources

H3a. The configuration of strategy and tangible resources will have a higher prediction of performance than the strategy and intangible resource configuration.

H3b. The configuration of strategy and tangible resources will have a higher prediction of tangible than intangible performance.

H3c. The configuration of strategy and intangible resources will have a higher prediction of intangible than tangible performance.

H4. The configuration of strategy, tangible resources and intangible resources will have a similar prediction power of tangible and intangible performance.

Methodology

The study focused on a population of 313 large NGOs operating in Uganda. This was comprised of national level NGOs, network organizations and international NGOs. A sample size of 173 was determined according to Bartlet et al. (2001). A total of 113 usable questionnaires were returned giving a 65% sample response rate. Both primary and secondary data were sought. A structured questionnaire on a 5 point likert type of scale was used. The target respondent in each NGO was the chief executive. Strategy was operationalized through 20 items that measured their choices and factors affecting such decisions. This section had a chronbach alpha of .700. The items were modified from Desarbo et al.'s (2005) measures of strategic choices of the Miles and Snow typology of prospectors, defenders, analysers and reactors. Resources were operationalized using a framework of both tangible and intangible aspects using items such as donations, reserves, revenue gains, equipment, facilities owned as tangible measures while the intangible measures included skills, collaborations, reputation and networks. Respondents were asked to rank to which extent the stated resource item was available in the organization. A similar framework was used by Kabanoff and Shane (2008). This section had 20 items and returned an alpha coefficient of .809. Similarly performance measures were categorised as tangible and intangible, with 20 indicators such revenues, means of financial sustainability, variety of services and outreach, customer satisfaction, partnerships, adherence to standards, service delivery and quality of governance process. Some items were modified from Herman & Renz (1998) and had an alpha of .907. In the analysis we controlled for registration status, duration of operation and size in terms of districts and employees.

Results

In the first set of results we provide descriptive statistics of the sample. Of the 113 NGOs covered by the study, 80 or 70.8% were national, 16 international (14.2%) and the rest network. The majority of the organizations had been in operation for 6 – 10 years (32%) followed by 11 – 15 years (24%) and above twenty years (23%). In terms of coverage 55% were present in less than 10 districts and only 9% operated in over 70 districts (there were 112 districts as at the time of the study). The respondents' level of education was very high with 99% having tertiary education; of these 20% were diploma holders, 32 % first degree and 45% had masters and other postgraduate training certificates and 2.7% were PhD holders.

From the Table 1 the variables were positively and significantly correlated. The highest correlation was between resources and performance at .728 significant at the 0.01 level. Strategy had moderately low but significant correlations with both resources and performance.

Table 1: Correlation analysis results, main variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Strategy	3.1470	.17624	1		
2. Resources	3.6690	.52869	.291**	1	
3. Performance	3.6724	.66310	.289**	.728**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N=113

The variable means are very high signifying respondent agreement. The highest standard deviation was on tangible performance. The correlations are all positive and significant. The highest association was between tangible resources and tangible performance with a coefficient of .762 significant at the 0.01 level. This is followed by intangible resources and intangible performance at .750. Strategy was more associated with intangible resources than all other sub-variables with .295 significant at 0.01level. The association between strategy and tangible resources and intangible performance was noticeably lower and less significant (p=0.05). The association between the two sub variables of performance was not as very high as would have been expected.

The regression results from the analysis are presented next. Through moderated hierarchical regressions results are summarized for strategy and the sub-variables in three levels namely the independent effect, the joint effect and the interaction effect. Configurations are measured at the last stage but the coefficients in the first models provide a discernment of the constellation and thus predictive power of the elements to performance. These results were obtained in three tests each of three models. The first set had main performance as the outcome variable, the second had tangible performance and the last had intangible performance. In the first model of each test control variables namely registration status (national, international or network), duration (years NGO has operated in Uganda) and size (number of districts NGOs operates in and employees) were entered. In table 3 are results under the three outcome variables with R2 and F-significance.

The results revealed interesting patterns. The first column gives the predictor variables entered into the model against the dependent variable in the top row. Intangible resources had the highest independent effect across the three outcome variables and all were significant (p=.000). Conversely strategy did not have a significant independent relationship with intangible performance (r2=.102, p=.063). The joint effects were all significant across the three outcome variables. The three predictors together had the highest predictions of performance variables. Strategy and tangible resources had a higher prediction of tangible performance than the other performance variables; while for strategy and intangible resources their highest prediction was intangible

performance. The results of the interaction effect are a higher level of configuration measurement than joint effects. Under tangible performance only the strategy – intangible resources interaction term was significant (r2=.609, p=.001); the other terms had higher coefficients but were not significant. Models predicting intangible performance were all not significant. The highest coefficient was returned by the three way interaction term of strategy – tangible resource – intangible resources. Under the main performance it was only the strategy – intangible resources interaction term that was significant (r2= .596; p=.013)

Discussion

The correlation analysis revealed significant associations between strategy, resources and performance. Strategy had a much lower association with performance than that of resources. The first hypothesis was concerned with the association between strategy, resources, resource sub variables namely tangible and intangible relationship with performance. H1a was particularly on the main variables; it was thus supported. There were significant associations between the main variables. This result agreed with previous scholars who found significant correlation between strategy, resources and performance (Crook et al., 2008; Slater et al., 2006; Kor & Mahoney, 2005; Ritchie & Kolodnisky, 2003). H1b focused on the sub variables. The results in table2 indicated positive and significant correlations between all the variables. H1b was thus upheld. We take note that although strategy was significantly associated with resources and performance at the 0.01 level, the strength reduced between strategy and tangible resources and strategy and intangible performance to a significance level of p=0.05. This result posits an important finding for future research. Another interesting set of coefficients is that between tangible resources being highly associated with tangible performance, and intangible resources highly associated with intangible performance. In view of this we agreed with Carmeli and Tishler (2004) who observed that both tangible and intangible elements play a significant role in organizational processes. However we could not find previous tests that used the performance sub variables to relate our finding.

Secondly we hypothesized that strategy would have a higher prediction of performance than the resource sub variables. Resource based view scholars posit that

Table 2: Correlation analysis results of strategy with sub variables of resources and performance

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Strategy	3.1470	.17624	1			
2. Tangible resources	3.3059	.63629	.222*	1		
3. Intangible resources	4.0528	.56343	.295**	.577**	1	
4. Tangible performance	3.3419	.74384	.287**	.762**	.621**	1
5. Intangible performance	4.0131	.59599	.204*	.518**	.750**	.657**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N=113
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table3:Results of various configurations of strategy, resources and performance elements

Variable	Tangible performance		Intangible performance		Main performance	
	R^2	Sig.	R^2	Sig.	R^2	Sig.
Control variables	.228	.000	.071	.097	.166	.001
Independent effect						
Strategy	.293	.004	.102	.063	.225	.006
Tangible resources	.668	.000	.302	.000	.525	.000
Intangible resources	.721	.000	.594	.000	.643	.000
Joint effect						
Strategy – Tangible resources	.657	.000	.287	.000	.525	.000
Strategy - Intangible resources	.564	.000	.582	.000	.571	.000
Strategy – Tangible resources – Intangible resources	.710	.000	.586	.000	.620	.000
Interaction effect						
Strategy x Tangible resources	.660	.334	.291	.463	.527	.505
Strategy x Intangible resources	.609	.001	.583	.737	.596	.013
Strategy x Tangible resources x Intangible resources	.711	.655	.587	.621	.626	.196

performance can be attributed to a bundle of elements. When resources are disaggregated strategy as a composite variable would be expected to be stronger in predicting performance than the sub variables. The result here was to draw our direction towards the configuration approach that is the thesis of this paper. The results in table 3 showed the relationship between strategy and performance moderately low but significant (r2=.225, p=.006). The relationship of performance with tangible resources was r2=.525 p=.000 and with intangible resources at r2=643 p= .000. These were high and very significant. H2 was thus rejected. The resource sub variables independently had higher relationship with performance than strategy.

Hypothesis 3 was to test the configurations of strategy, resource sub variables and performance sub variables. The results in table 3 were set to reflect the progression in configuration from the independent effect, joint effect and interaction effect. Drawing insights from previous studies interaction effect is generally widely used to

establish and test configurations (Short et al., 2008; Fiss, 2007; Dess et al., 1997). H3a focused on prediction of performance between the configurations of strategy, tangible and intangible resources. The interaction of strategy and tangible resources returned r2=.527 p=.505 while that of strategy and intangible resources had r2=.596 p=.013. With these results H3a is rejected. The strategy and tangible resources configuration was not significant. H3b was concerned with the relationship between strategy and tangible resources with tangible and intangible performance. The results showed that both models were not significant. However the former had a higher coefficient of determination that the latter (r2=660, p=.334 versus r2=.291 p=.463). H3b was thus supported. In the next model, strategy and intangible resources had a significant relationship with tangible performance (r2=.609 p=.001) and that with intangible performance was not significant (r2=.583 p=.737). H3c was thus not supported; strategy – intangible resources had a stronger prediction of tangible than intangible performance. Finally

in H4 we tested for the three way interaction effect. It had been hypothesized that the strategy – tangible resources – intangible resources configuration would have an equal and similar relationship with tangible and intangible performance. The relationship was not similar although both models were not significant. H4 was thus rejected.

These results provide rich insights in our understanding of strategy, resource and performance relationships. The use of sub variables was very important to recognize how the elements in the main variables coalesce to give certain outcomes, as the principle of configurational theory. The resource based view scholars state that performance can be attributed to a bundle of elements (Wenerfelt, 1984; Peteraf, 1993). When Carmeli and Tishler (2004) disaggregated resources and studied intangibles only with performance they found some measures significant and others not. As NGOs are a service sector with tangible and intangible inputs and outputs, the examination of relationships on both sub variables is a milestone in strategy studies.

In extant strategic management literature strategy is an abstract concept that still eludes scholars and practitioners (Giovani & Rivkin, 2007, Giovan et al. 2005). Zajac and Shortell (1989) posited that the level of strategy is relatively enduring and unlikely to change substantially in the short term. In the configuration approach strategy has a mutually reinforcing effect with resources. As Slater et al. (2006) argued, the ability to formulate a strategy is a resource and resources provide the direction for organizational strategy. This reversal causation is highlighted by Dess et al. (1993) in studying configurations. Roller (1996) on the other hand posited that resources determine strategy. Our finding of strategy – intangible resource being significant while that of strategy – tangible not, is supported by the literature that strategy is in the mind of managers and firm routines (Giovan et al. 2005; March, Schultz & Zhuo, 2000; Giovani & Rivkin, 2007). These results also agree with Carmeli and Tishler (2004) that intangible resources and performance have a strong relationship.

Implications

These results on various configurations of strategy and resources with implications on performance are of interest to researchers and practitioners. We have found that different patterns of the predictors will lead to different outcomes of performance. Both tangible and intangible resources should be emphasized in NGO operations. The best predictor configuration was strategy – intangible resources. It was significant for both tangible and main performance and moderately high for intangible performance although not significant. From secondary data sources and supported in literature, NGOs are preoccupied with fundraising. This study insinuates that focus on only funds need be coalesced with building intangible resources like networks, reputation,

sustainability measures, and good public image. These will lead to higher performance than tangible resources only. This is a very important finding for managers in the NGO sector. In the discussion we have highlighted the closeness of strategy and resources from previous studies to the effect that they have a reversal effect. Either can be a predictor of the other. This should be of concern for managers. Having a clear strategy may lead to acquisition of desired resources; on the other hand when resources are available managers are able to make effective strategy decisions. In such a reciprocal relationship, therefore, we have ascertained that a configuration between them is important to be certain of higher performance outcomes. This point is also recommended to further empirical reaffirmation in multiple contexts. Further for the research community the results of this study present profound points of departure. The context was NGOs, a hitherto unexplored sector by pure strategy scholars. The configuration approach is not exhausted yet in empirical reaffirmations. There is need for further analytical examinations of the behavior of strategy, resources and other environmental contingencies that are hall marks in NGO operations. Our study has provided pointers to possible areas of further study in understanding strategic management in the NGO sector in Uganda which may be reminiscent of other African countries where NGOs have become active in the development agenda.

The results of this study cannot be without limitations. Our research design might have limited our results in a way that resources are accumulated over time and their prediction of performance might require comparison of different time periods. The choice of strategy measures is still problematic; there might have been gaps in the local understanding of the concept which affected the responses. There was limited configuration literature on NGOs setting and that from different contexts may not have been very closer to understanding our results. However we opine that this study has added significant insights to the literature on the configuration approach and on NGOs.

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