# Corporate Entrepreneurship Antecedents and Organization Performance in Kenya: An Empirical Study

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**Abstract**

*As research on internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship evolves, numerous researchers have acknowledged it as an important strategy in promoting and fostering an environment for innovation. The aim of this study was to adopt an entrepreneurship model (Corporate Entrepreneurship Antecedents) predominantly developed and mostly applied in developed economies. The model was then to be tested for its adaptability in an emerging economy, in this case Kenya and establish its influence on organization performance. This has remained largely untested. A quantitative study approach was carried out, using a questionnaire survey to obtain responses from 43 established Kenyan banks. The findings indicated that entrepreneurship models are contingent on the economic and environmental context. Confirmatory factor analysis identified three specific dimensions that emerged from the original five dimensions instrument adopted which are crucial for an environment conducive to entrepreneurial behavior in Kenya. They include top management support, work discretion/autonomy and rewards/reinforcement. These antecedents also strongly influenced the organization performance and therefore offer timely contribution towards advanced research in corporate entrepreneurship in emerging economies. This paper enriches understanding of the contingent nature of entrepreneurship models, suggesting that emerging country context matters in terms of organization internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship and its effect on performance.*

**Keywords:** Corporate Entrepreneurship, Organization, Performance, Internal Environment, Kenya

## Introduction

Diagnosing an organizations' internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship is crucially important for the survival, growth and sustainability as well as for revitalizing and improving performance (Kuratko, Hornsby & Covin, 2014). Such an environment stimulates creativity and innovations encouraging entrepreneurial culture throughout the organization's operations which in turn reinforces the organization position in existing markets by ensuring new and lucrative sustainable fields (Zahra *et al*., 2009). Africa is rising with emerging economies-Kenya included thus adapting our markets to the standards of developed markets is of paramount importance so that we can gain a competitive advantage. Emerging economies are becoming a major economic force in the world today and entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in the process (Bruton *et al*., 2010). Fostering an internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship in the organizations may prove to be an important asset for the growth,

survival and sustainability of existing organization. This is because, it may improve their ability to recognize and chase opportunities well ahead of their competitors (Shamsuddin *et al.,* 2012).

The internal environment dimensions for corporate entrepreneurship in established organizations comprise the: top management support, work discretion, rewards and reinforcement, time availability and organization boundaries (Kuratko *et al*., 2014; Hornsby, Kuratko, Holt & Wales, 2013;Honsby *et al.,* 2002; Hornsby *et al.,* 2009). Empirically, several studies have been conducted on this issue especially in developed countries. Focus of these studies was on the correlation between internal environment dimensions for corporate entrepreneurship in different analysis scenarios (Shamsuddin *et al*., 2012). Despite numerous studies on the issues of corporate entrepreneurship dimensions, studies on internal corporate entrepreneurship dimensions in emerging countries are still lacking (Entebang *et al*., 2006; Aktan & Bulut, 2008). Hence, this paper adds to the literature of internal corporate entrepreneurship dimensions by examining first, the validity of the corporate entrepreneurship assessment instrument adapted from Kuratko *et al.,* (2014) and second, looks at the impact of the same on the organization performance of commercial banks in Kenya.

This paper is an analysis of the internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship of the commercial bank. It is envisaged that recommendations made under this study will eventually be proposed to the beneficiaries of this study; interested business practitioners, policy makers and researchers for implementation and further promotion of corporate entrepreneurship at the workplace. Based on the above general purpose, the main research objective was to study the effects of internal environment dimensions for corporate entrepreneurship on the organization performance. The study attempts to achieve specific objectives as follows: To identify and confirm the internal environment dimensions for corporate entrepreneurship from a tool developed from a diverse cultural background, to examine the internal environment dimensions for corporate entrepreneurship and their influence on the organization performance of commercial banks. There are several considerations that have led to the focus of this study. First, issues of corporate entrepreneurship have, of late, evoked increased interest not only from academics, but also from business practitioners and policy makers. While the literature on corporate entrepreneurship dimensions suggest that they are some major dimensions which are significant and have lasting effect on an organization performance (Zahra *et al.,* 2009), there is lack of insight on these dimensions and how they shape organization performance.

**Literature Review**

One of the manager's role and responsibility as a corporate entrepreneur is creating an internal work environment that is highly conducive to creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial behavior (Kuratko, Hornsby & Covin, 2014). Within such an environment, each employee has an opportunity to act upon his or her innate entrepreneurial potential which is based on calculated assessment. This attempt has been evolving over the last 42 years beginning with Peterson and Berger (1972), Hill and Hlavacek (1972), Quin (1979), Lumpkin and Dess (2001), Kuratko, Ireland and Hornsby (2001), Morris and Kuratko (2002), Honrsby and Kuratko (2003) and Kuratko *et al*., (2014).Guth and Ginsberg (1990) and Sharma and Chrisman (1999) stressed and reinforced respectively that this internal organizational work environment encompasses two major types of phenomena: new venture

creation within existing organizations and the transformation of ongoing organizations through strategic renewal (Kuratko, Hornsby & Covin, 2014). Morris and Kuratko (2002) cited two phenomena as constituting the domain of the internal organization work environment conducive to entrepreneurship: *corporate venturing*-approaches that consider additional of new businesses (or portion of new business via equity investments) to the corporation which can be accomplished through three implementation modes-internal corporate venturing, external corporate venturing and cooperative corporate venturing. By contrast, *strategic entrepreneurship*-approaches that consider exhibition if large-scale or otherwise highly consequential innovations that are adopted in the organizational pursuit of competitive advantage. With strategic entrepreneurship, innovation can be in any of the following areas-business model, product offerings, the organization's strategy, served market or internal firm's structures, processes and capabilities (Hornsby, Kuratko, Holt & Wales, 2013). In either case, the internal organizational environment becomes a critical area of focus when corporate entrepreneurship activities and behavior are to be embraced and launched.

Research into internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship has been conducted and evolved trying to identify specific organizational antecedents of manager's entrepreneurial behavior e.g. Kuratko, Montago and Hornsby (1990), Kuratko, Ireland and Hornsby (2001), Hornsby, Kuratko, Shephard, and Bott (2009), Hornsby *et al*. (2013), Kuratko*et el.* (2014); building upon the results previously reported by Kuratko *et al*. (1990), Hornsby *et al.* (1999), Hornsby, Kuratko and Zahra (2002). An integrated review and analysis of the literature demonstrates a grouping of five major dimensions promoting and supporting an environment for entrepreneurial behavior: (1) top management support (2) work discretion (3) reward/reinforcement (4) time availability and (5) organizational boundaries. These underlying organizational dimensions are required for individuals to perceive an innovation-friendly environment (Kuratko, Hornsby & Bishop, 2005; Kuratko *et al.,* 2014).

***Top Management Support***

The extent to which one perceives that top managers support, facilitate, and promote entrepreneurial behavior, including the championing of innovative ideas and providing the resources people require to undertake entrepreneurial actions. Top management support has been found to have a direct positive relationship with an organization's innovative outcomes. Also, research shows each level of management plays key roles in facilitating corporate entrepreneurship (Kuratko *et al.*, 2014).

***Work Discretion***

This is the extent, to which one perceives that the organization tolerates failure, provides decision-making latitude and freedom from excessive oversight as well as delegate authority and responsibility to lower-level managers and workers. Research suggests entrepreneurial opportunities are often best recognized by those with discretion over how to perform their work, as well as by those encouraged to engage in experimentation (Kuratko *et al.,* 2014).

***Rewards and Reinforcement***

The extent to which one perceives the organization uses systems that reward based on entrepreneurial activity and success. Reward systems that encourage risk taking and innovation have been shown to have a strong effect on individuals' tendencies to behave in entrepreneurial manners. Numerous studies (Hisrich & Peters, 1986; Covin & Miles, 1999;

Kuratko *et al.,* 2001) have identified 'reward and resource availability' as a principal determinant of entrepreneurial behavior by middle-and first-level managers (Kuratko *et al.,* 2014).

***Time Availability***

A perception that the workload schedules ensure extra time for individuals and groups to pursue innovations, with jobs structured in ways to support such efforts and achieve short- and long-term organizational goals. Research suggests time availability among managers is an important resource for generating entrepreneurial initiatives. For example, the availability of unstructured or free time can enable would-be corporate innovators to consider opportunities for innovation that may be precluded by their required work schedules (Kuratko *et al.,* 2014).

***Organizational Boundaries***

This is the extent to which one perceives that there are flexible organizational boundaries that is useful in promoting entrepreneurial activity because they enhance the flow of information between the external environment and the organization, as well as between departments / divisions in the organization. However, innovative outcomes emerge most predictably when innovation is treated as a structured and purposeful (vs. chaotic) process. Consistent with this point, organization theorists have long recognized that productive outcomes are most readily accomplished in organizational systems when uncertainty is kept at manageable levels; this can be achieved through setting boundaries that induce, direct, and encourage coordinated innovative behavior across the organization. In short, organizational boundaries can ensure the productive use of innovation enabling resources (Kuratko *et al.*, 2014).

The above suggested dimensions are controllable by managers (as opposed to uncontrollable forces in the external environment). However, without proper assessment of these dimensions, there can be no understanding of how they are perceived in the organization. Therefore, managers are challenged to measure the existence of these antecedents and the perception through the lenses of employees. Managers at all levels must be committed to the establishment of entrepreneurial behaviors if corporate innovation is ever going to be fostered in an organization (Kuratko, Ireland, Covin, & Hornsby, 2005). Thus, the ability to measure the existence and employee perceptions of these internal dimensions becomes a priority for any organization concerned with corporate entrepreneurship (Kuratko *et al.,* 2014).

***Internal Environmental Factors for Corporate Entrepreneurship and Organization Performance***

The studies on Corporate Entrepreneurship in developed and developing economies especially after 1990's have revealed that entrepreneurial activities within the organizations provide successful organization performances (Karacaoglu, Bayrakdaroglu, & San, 2012; Rajshekkar, *et al.,* 2012; Rauch, Wiklund, Lumpkin, & Frese, 2009; Lumpkin & Dess, 2001; Simsek *et al.,* 2009; Phillip *et al.,* 2009). Most of these studies show that the corporate entrepreneurship has a multi-dimensional structure and the most commonly determined dimensions of corporate entrepreneurship are risk taking, innovation, proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness (Sharma & Chrisman, 1999; Shamsuddin, Othman, & Shahadan, 2012; Dess *et al.,* 2003) which has brought divergent views and outcomes- some studies confirmed a positive relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and organizations

performance (Mokaya, 2012; Karacaoglu *et al.*, 2012), while other studies affirmed a negative (Covin, Slevin, & Schultz, 1994; Shamsuddin, *et al.*, 2012) relationship. Kuratko *et al.*, (2014) however, has identified five specific internal environmental factors for corporate entrepreneurship and this study purpose to investigate the implications of these dimensions in a developing economy and how they influence organization's performance. Therefore the study set out to investigate the following hypotheses.

H: Internal environment for Corporate Entrepreneurship is positively associated with organizational performance.

*H1a*: Management Support (MS) is positively related to Organization Performance (OP).

*H1b*: Work Discretion (WD) is positively related to organization performance.

*H1c*: Rewards/Reinforcement (RR) is positively related to organization performance.

*H1d*: An Organizational Boundary (OB) is positively related to organization performance.

*H1e*: Time Availability (TA) is positively related to organization performance

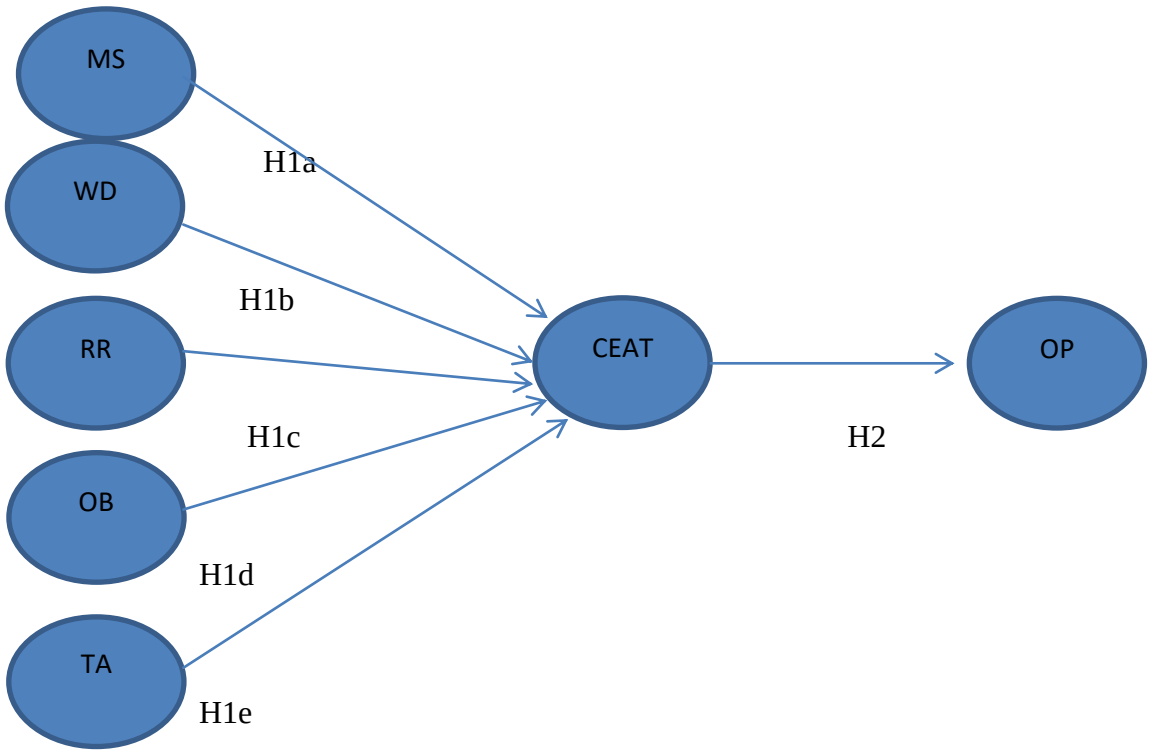


**Figure 1: Hypothesized Research Model**

## Methodology

### *Technique and Procedure*

The data presented in this paper is findings from a quantitative survey design using convenience sampling of managers of registered commercial banks by Central Bank of

Kenya. The sample was collected over a period of three months using a self-administered questionnaire with scaled statements. The questionnaire consisted of 48 items measuring the antecedents of Corporate Entrepreneurship and 6 items for organization performance. Each of the multi-item measures was based on a five points Likert scale. Respondents were asked to rate the 48 statements by choosing from a scale ranging between 1 ("strongly disagree") and 5 ("strongly agree") for the Corporate Entrepreneurship and 6 statements between 1 ("far above average") and 5 ("far below average") for organization performance. From the 250 managers from the various banks, only 113 responses (45.2 %) were received and only 111 were usable for data analysis because some of the respondents failed to complete all the items in the Corporate Entrepreneurship. The sample consisted of 58 men and 55 women with age categories as follow: below 25 (N=4), 25-34 (N=80), 35-44 (N=21), 45-54 (N=5) and above 55 (N=1)

***Analyses and Results***

To develop an appropriate measure, the study carried out factor analysis to obtain the values for KMO, Bartlett's test of sphericity. Burns and Burns (2008) suggest that the two tests, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) to be considered. The result of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.846, reaching the desired value of .80 or above (Hair *et al.*, 2006). This indicated that the data was adequate to run factor analysis. Moreover, the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi 2$ (496) =1836.644, $p < .000$) confirming that, patterns of correlations are close and factor analysis should yield consistent and reliable factors. Statistically, this explains that there are relationships between the variables and that they can be appropriately included in the factor analysis. The combination of the two tests supports the suitability of the factor analysis technique.

*Normality Assessment*

Kline (1999) states that, the univariate normality of distribution of all interval variables needs to be investigated to choose an appropriate estimation method in SEM. If the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis are greater than 2 and 7 respectively, the data set is considered to have an extreme non-normality. If that is the case, a number of alternative estimation techniques in Structural Equation Modeling should be employed such as asymptotically distribution free, general least squares and weighted least square. However, if the distribution of scores on variables do not deviate significantly from normality, the maximum likelihood estimation, which is the most widely used approach in SEM, can be applied (Hair *et al*., 2006). For this study, the data was normally distributed since the values were within the recommended range as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Normality Assessment**

| N | | Mean | Std. Dev. | Var. | Skew. | Std. E. Skew | Kurt | Std. E. Kurt | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Missing | | | | | | | | | |
| 111 | 3 | 6.59 | 5.458 | 29.790 | 1.460 | .229 | 2.205 | .455 | 0 | 26 |

**Key:** Std. Dev = Standard Deviation; Var = Variance; Skew = Skewness; Std. E. Skew = Standard Error of Skewness; Kurt = Kurtosis; Std. E. Kurt = Standard error of Kurtosis; Min = Minimum; Max = Maximum

*Testing for Multicollinearity*

The most straightforward way to test for multicollinearity is through the correlation coefficients whereby extreme multicollinearity is represented by a correlation coefficient of 1 (Saunders *et al.,* 2016). For this study however, the multicollinearity was assessed with variance inflation factor (VIF). The range for VIF was between 1.267 and 2.725 as shown in Table 2. These values were below the threshold of 10.

**Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and Construct Reliability**

| Variable | Mean | SD | Cronbach's Alpha | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time Availability | 3.044 | 0.3390 | 0.557 | 1.693 |
| Rewards and Reinforcement | 3.485 | 0.1342 | 0.767 | 1.838 |
| Work Discretion | 2.997 | 0.1817 | 0.832 | 2.725 |
| Organization Boundaries | 3.718 | 0.2983 | 0.716 | 1.267 |
| Management Support | 2.909 | 0.2345 | 0.945 | 2.690 |
| Organization performance | 2.747 | 0.1095 | 0.918 | |

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis*

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to assess the measurement model, and structural equation modeling used to test the hypothesized model by assessing the relationships between variables of interest. The psychometric properties of the measurement scales were assessed in accordance with accepted practices-reliability, discriminant validity and convergent validity (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the measurement instrument. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients are shown in Table 2 above. These coefficients appear to satisfy Nunnally's (1978) suggested minimum criterion for internal reliability. The entire coefficients measures exceeded 0.7 with exceptional of time availability which was dropped. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the constructs was calculated and the values were above threshold level of 0.50, which ensures the validity of the instrument. The calculated values of AVE are mentioned in Table 3. To ensure that the constructs are actually measuring what they are supposed to, discriminant validity is shown in Table 3. In this table, the MSV and ASV for the constructs were below AVE. In addition, AVE for each construct is more than each of the squared correlation between two constructs. Therefore, discriminant validity was adequate the components.

**Table 3: Convergent and Discriminant Validity**

| | AVE | MSV | ASV | MS | OP | WD | RR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MS** | 0.538 | 0.523 | 0.293 | **0.733** | | | |
| **OP** | 0.653 | 0.078 | 0.032 | -0.134 | **0.808** | | |
| **WD** | 0.577 | 0.523 | 0.284 | 0.723 | -0.024 | **0.759** | |
| **RR** | 0.597 | 0.339 | 0.248 | 0.582 | -0.279 | 0.573 | **0.773** |

*Total Variance Explained*

Results for total variance explained showed that five component accounted for 56.863% of the total variability (31.811%; 8.109%; 6.184%; 5.904% and 4.854%). Table 4 below depicts this finding.

**Table 4: Total Variance Explained**

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total |
| 1 | 10.180 | 31.811 | 31.811 | 10.180 | 31.811 | 31.811 | 9.109 |
| 2 | 2.595 | 8.109 | 39.920 | 2.595 | 8.109 | 39.920 | 6.670 |
| 3 | 1.979 | 6.184 | 46.104 | 1.979 | 6.184 | 46.104 | 5.207 |
| 4 | 1.889 | 5.904 | 52.009 | 1.889 | 5.904 | 52.009 | 2.562 |
| 5 | 1.553 | 4.854 | 56.863 | 1.553 | 4.854 | 56.863 | 2.308 |
| 6 | 1.330 | 4.157 | 61.020 | | | | |
| 7 | 1.180 | 3.688 | 64.708 | | | | |
| 8 | 1.010 | 3.157 | 67.865 | | | | |
| 9 | .990 | 3.094 | 70.959 | | | | |
| 10 | .822 | 2.568 | 73.528 | | | | |
| 11 | .800 | 2.499 | 76.027 | | | | |
| 12 | .730 | 2.282 | 78.309 | | | | |
| 13 | .697 | 2.177 | 80.486 | | | | |
| 14 | .586 | 1.830 | 82.316 | | | | |
| 15 | .548 | 1.713 | 84.029 | | | | |
| 16 | .529 | 1.654 | 85.683 | | | | |
| 17 | .508 | 1.586 | 87.269 | | | | |
| 18 | .467 | 1.460 | 88.730 | | | | |
| 19 | .427 | 1.334 | 90.063 | | | | |
| 20 | .377 | 1.177 | 91.240 | | | | |
| 21 | .376 | 1.175 | 92.415 | | | | |
| 22 | .351 | 1.095 | 93.511 | | | | |
| 23 | .309 | .965 | 94.476 | | | | |
| 24 | .276 | .862 | 95.338 | | | | |
| 25 | .257 | .802 | 96.140 | | | | |
| 26 | .239 | .747 | 96.886 | | | | |
| 27 | .212 | .663 | 97.549 | | | | |
| 28 | .204 | .638 | 98.187 | | | | |
| 29 | .176 | .549 | 98.736 | | | | |
| 30 | .146 | .456 | 99.192 | | | | |
| 31 | .143 | .446 | 99.638 | | | | |
| 32 | .116 | .362 | 100.000 | | | | |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Antecedents*

Confirmatory factor analysis of the antecedents was done since the theoretical model was adapted. The items and the standardized factor loadings for this CFA are reported in Figure 2. Three exogenous construct-management support, work discretion and rewards/reinforcement-influence the Corporate Entrepreneurship substantially while two-organizational boundary and time availability-did not load appropriately and was therefore omitted from the subsequent analysis. Multiple fit indices were used to evaluate fit and the fit indices indicated that the model fitted the data well-CMIN/DF=1.431; CFI=0.938; IFI=0.939; TLI=0.926; RMSEA=0.062. These indices values exceeded the recommended threshold value 0.90 (Bagozzi, Yi & Nassen, 1998).

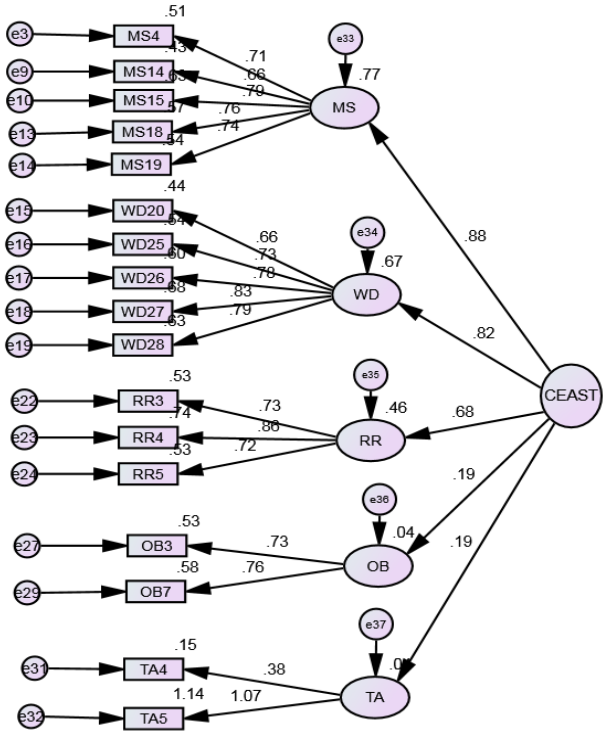


**Figure 2: First Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

A further exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis for the second order was conducted to evaluate the psychometric properties of the Corporate Entrepreneurship with the omitted dimensions as shown in Figure 3. The fit indices for the second order indicated that the model fitted the data adequately-CMIN/DF=1.611; CFI=0.947; IFI=0.948; TLI=0.933; RMSEA=0.079.

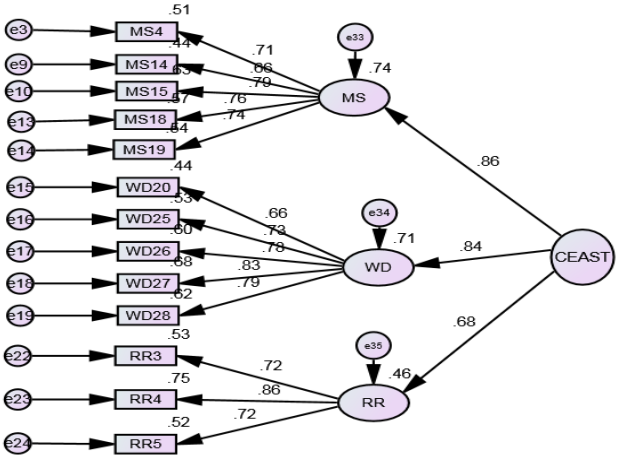


**Figure 3: First Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Finally, the resultant SEM for the hypothesized model was also conducted to determine the existence of exogenous latent variables (1-3), first-grade endogenous latent variable and the organizational performance (OP) and to establish the casual relationships among the hypothesized variables as shown in Figure 4, the fit indices of the averall model were- CMIN/DF=1.293; CFI=0.957; IFI=0.958; TLI=0.948; RMSEA=0.059. All fit indices exceeded the recommended guideline for good fit, and therefore, the model reflects good measurement and statistical fit which aids in assessing the hypotheses. By examining the standardized parameters estimates, the findings show that work discretion (β=0.85), management support (β=0.83), and rewards/reinforcement (β=0.72), influences corporate entrepreneurship environment as predicted in H1a, H1b and H1c respectively. Comparing the magnitudes of the effects indicate that, work discretion is larger than management support which is larger the rewards/reinforcement. Finally, we find a significant inverse relationship between corporate entrepreneurship environment and organization performance (β=-0.42), hence supporting H2.

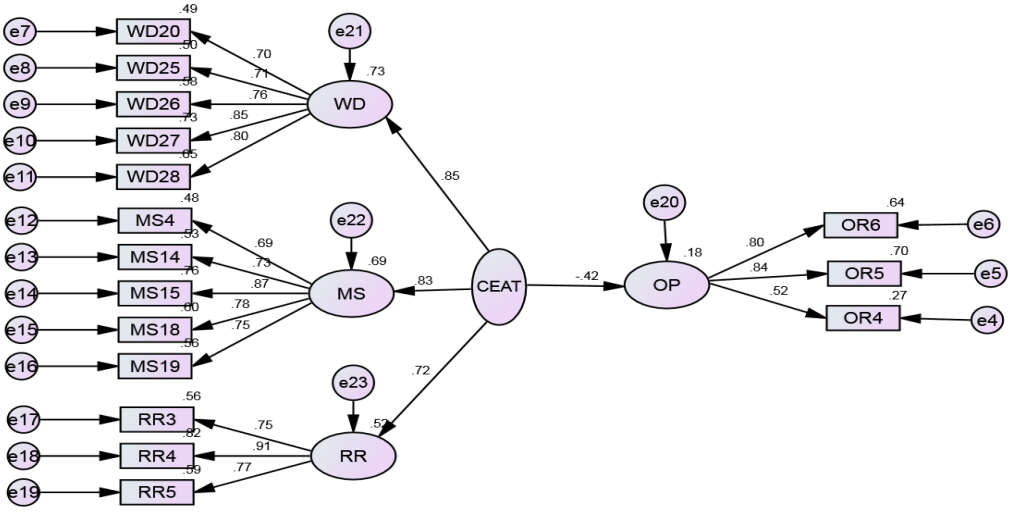


**Figure 4: Final Structural Equation Model**

**Discussion, Implications and Conclusion**

This paper investigated a firm-level entrepreneurship model developed and mostly applied in developed countries to assess its applicability in an emerging economy focusing on the banking sector. The findings of this research indicated that entrepreneurship theories are contingent on the economic and environmental context in which they areapplied. This is supported by other researchers (Margarieth, 2012, Puffer *et al*., 2010; Lou & Junkunc, 2008;Wright *et al*., 2005). Internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship is a relatively under-researched construct particularly in developing and emerging economies, and the currentstudy expands upon previous work.

First, this study effort found that a supportive organization internal environment for entrepreneurship is a crucial capability of entrepreneurial organization even in emerging economies. The three salient antecedents seem to be management support, work discretion and rewards and reinforcement. However, organizational boundaries and time availability in our present analysis and results did not at least as presently conceived and measured by Corporate Entrepreneurship demonstrate substantive significant relationships with internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship.

The findings are supported by Margarieth (2012), Sebora *et al*. (2010) and Adonisi and VanWyk (2011) and confirmed that, measurement instruments need to be adapted to the different environmental and emerging economies contexts. The findings of this study hold practical significance for practitioners, academia and researchers both in Kenya and other countries. First, organizations conducting their business in emerging economies need to be mindful that entrepreneurial models and theories have a market-based economy bias and practitioners and executives need to be aware of the contingent nature of the entrepreneurial process when developing entrepreneurial strategies based on adapted models in a particular economic context. Second, organization internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship can be enhance by looking into how top management support innovativeness in products, services and processes and the autonomy and rewards allocated in focusing and exploiting opportunities available.

Future research should aim to triangulate the views of few respondents from the banks involved with secondary sources and focus on the longitudinal nature. Informant bias, the use of perceptual measures and data collected from only one emerging-Kenya-economy may represent limitations. Future research should test these findings across different sectors and compare organizations and corporate environmental antecedents from several emerging economies. Additionally, other opportunities for future research should focus on strategies organizations adopt to overcome environmental constraints in emerging economies particularly in Africa and how these strategies can foster Corporate Entrepreneurship. While the model in this paper focused on firm-level analysis of Corporate Entrepreneurship, the role of the individual within the process should also be studied, providing a more robust predictive model to for internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship particularly in emerging economies.

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