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## GET IT TOGETHER: EXPLORING DIFFERENT ROLES IN COLLECTIVE OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION (SUMMARY)

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## ≈ SUMMARY ≈

**GET IT TOGETHER: EXPLORING DIFFERENT ROLES IN COLLECTIVE OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION**

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**Principal Topic**

Tackling grand societal challenges demands sustainable business models and collective action. By combining both, community enterprises, i.e. businesses that are established, owned and controlled by the members of the local community, constitute effective self-development mechanisms that generate multiple benefits for local communities. Although the number of such enterprises is growing and the phenomenon has increasingly attracted scholarly interest, we lack a theoretical understanding of why and how opportunities for such ventures are successfully recognized, developed and exploited. As not communities as a holistic entity identify and develop opportunities, but individuals within the community do, we adopt an individual perspective and view the community as a reflection of its individual members. Our objective is to open the black box of the community and provide theoretical explanation for different roles during the community entrepreneurship process.

**Method**

We adopt an inductive research design based on four case studies of community enterprises. In each of the cases, we interviewed members in leading positions and proceeded with a snowball strategy. On average, we rely on eight interviews per case and a massive body of archival data. Data analysis follows a multistep approach of inductive and abductive coding.

**Results and Implications**

While opportunities for community entrepreneurship are identified by a small group of people, development and exploitation are collective endeavors. Passion turns out to be a key driver of the entrepreneurial process. Throughout the process, we delineate six informal roles occupied by people with different identity structures. Interestingly, we find that passion is not related to salience of an entrepreneurial role identity, but to a strong local community member role identity. During the time of the entrepreneurial process, entrepreneurial behaviors temporarily become part of the semantic content of the local community member role identity.

We advance the burgeoning stream of community entrepreneurship research by investigating how communities as collective units function as entrepreneurs and why community ventures emerge. Our findings add to our understanding of how role identities and passion affect the entrepreneurial process (Cardon et al., 2009), and how identity compositions of founders lead to the creation of novel types of hybrid venture (Wry & York, 2015).

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