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ROLES OF ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET AND INNOVATION ON SOCIAL VALUE CREATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Community-based organisations (CBOs) are positioned across Nigeria's development architecture as grassroots implementation partners, yet many struggle to convert entrepreneurial intent into measurable social outcomes, particularly under conditions of unstable donor funding and weak institutional coordination. This study investigates the roles of entrepreneurial mindset and innovation in social value creation among community-based organisations in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Drawing on Social Entrepreneurship Theory and Innovation Diffusion Theory, the study hypothesises that entrepreneurial mindset is positively related to social value creation both directly and indirectly through innovation. Data were collected from 102 valid respondents, comprising owners and managers of registered CBOs, using a cross-sectional census survey design, and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS Version 4 with bootstrapping of 5,000 subsamples. The results show that entrepreneurial mindset is significantly associated with social value creation ($\beta = 0.342$, $p < .001$) and with innovation ($\beta = 0.614$, $p < .001$), that innovation is significantly associated with social value creation ($\beta = 0.441$, $p < .001$), and that innovation partially mediates the entrepreneurial mindset–social value creation relationship ($\beta = 0.271$, $p < .001$, VAF = 44.2%). The study offers an integrated account of how entrepreneurial cognition is associated with community-level social value creation through the innovative work behaviours with which it is associated, with implications for leadership development and donor programme design among community-based organisations in resource-constrained public sector contexts.

Introduction

Social value creation has become a central principle in contemporary development practice as governments, donors, and impact investors seek more effective responses to persistent challenges such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, and limited access to essential services (OECD, 2020; World Bank, 2022). Community-based organisations (CBOs) are widely recognised as critical actors in this agenda because of their proximity to local populations, contextual knowledge, and capacity to design community-

driven interventions, translating social value principles into practice through interventions in livelihoods, health, education, and social protection among marginalised and underserved groups (OECD, 2020; World Bank, 2022). In Nigeria specifically, CBOs constitute a substantial yet under-examined component of the national development ecosystem, operating extensively at community and local government levels where institutional capacity is frequently weak, and are often positioned as implementation partners for national development plans emphasising inclusive growth and community participation (UNDP, 2023).

A central weakness underpinning the sector is the heavy dependence of Nigerian community-based organisations on short-term and unstable funding: over 60 percent of civil society and community-based organisations in Nigeria rely primarily on project-based donor funding with cycles often lasting less than two years, which severely limits their capacity to plan for long-term community outcomes or embed robust impact measurement systems (British Council, 2021; USAID, 2022). Despite the proliferation of CBO-led programmes, Nigeria continues to experience high poverty and unemployment, with 40.1 percent of the population living below the national poverty line and youth unemployment and underemployment remaining above 40 percent (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2023). Structural and external support mechanisms, including the National Social Investment Programme and donor-funded capacity-building interventions, have sought to strengthen CBO effectiveness, but evidence indicates that their coverage and depth remain uneven, and external interventions alone appear insufficient to ensure durable community outcomes (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

Entrepreneurial mindset has increasingly been advanced in the literature as a practical, internally driven approach to addressing persistent weaknesses in social value creation among community-based organisations, particularly in resource-constrained contexts (Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Shepherd and Patzelt, 2018; Makuya and Changalima, 2024). Empirical studies provide growing evidence that entrepreneurial mindset is directly linked to social value creation: Kruse et al. (2020) find that opportunity recognition and proactive orientation significantly enhance the social value generated by social enterprises, and evidence from African contexts indicates that socially oriented actors with strong entrepreneurial mindset characteristics are more effective in generating employment, improving livelihoods, and expanding access to basic services in underserved communities (Akoh and Lekhanya, 2022; Ndlovu et al., 2023). While entrepreneurial mindset shapes how opportunities for social impact are perceived, it is not automatically associated with tangible social value outcomes; the association of entrepreneurial thinking with improved community wellbeing is linked to pathways that connect ideas and intentions with effective action. Innovation provides this practical pathway by which organisations develop new or improved products, services, and processes that respond directly to local needs (Schumpeter, 1934; Tidd and Bessant, 2018; Nahuche Bashir et al., 2024), with recent scholarship increasingly supporting the view that innovation plays a mediating role between entrepreneurial orientation and organisational performance (Wang and Li, 2018; Belás et al., 2022).

Despite these insights, few empirical studies integrate entrepreneurial mindset, innovation, and social value creation within a single analytical framework, particularly in the context of community-based organisations in Nigeria. This study addresses that gap by investigating the roles of entrepreneurial mindset and innovation in social value creation among community-based organisations in Kaduna State, Nigeria, hence the research question:

RQ1: To what extent does entrepreneurial mindset relate with social value creation, and to what extent does innovation mediate this relationship?

Theoretical Foundation and Hypotheses Development

This study draws on Social Entrepreneurship Theory and Innovation Diffusion Theory to justify the hypothesised relationships. Social Entrepreneurship Theory (Dees, 1998; Mair and Marti, 2006) holds that entrepreneurially minded actors identify opportunities to address systemic social problems, mobilise resources, and implement solutions that improve community welfare, positioning entrepreneurial mindset elements such as opportunity orientation, creativity, and resilience as central to social value creation. Innovation Diffusion Theory (Rogers, 1962; 2003) explains how new ideas, practices, and solutions spread within a social system, and is particularly relevant to community-based organisations because these organisations operate within close-knit social systems where shared values, trust, and collective action strongly influence whether an entrepreneurial idea is accepted, sustained, and scaled into community benefit. Flowing from these two frameworks, we argue that entrepreneurial mindset is positively associated with social value creation both directly, through its cognitive and motivational effects on opportunity-seeking behaviour, and indirectly, through the innovative work behaviours with which entrepreneurial mindset is associated and that must be diffused within the organisation and community before social impact is realised.

Entrepreneurial Mindset

Entrepreneurial mindset refers to the set of attitudes, cognitive styles, and behavioural tendencies, including opportunity recognition, tolerance for ambiguity, creativity, and calculated risk propensity, that enable individuals or organisations to identify opportunities, take initiative, and persist when facing challenges (Fayolle and Liñán, 2014; Davis, Hall, and Mayer, 2016). Leaders who exhibit these orientations actively identify unmet community needs, design responsive interventions, and sustain engagement despite resource and institutional constraints, structurally positioning entrepreneurial mindset as closely associated with the depth and durability of social outcomes an organisation reports. This is consistent with Kruse et al. (2020), who found that opportunity recognition and proactive orientation significantly enhance social value generated by social enterprises, and with Makuya and Changalima (2024), who showed that mindset-related constructs strengthen intentions oriented toward community wellbeing. We therefore hypothesise that:

H1: Entrepreneurial mindset is positively related to social value creation among community-based organisations in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Beyond its direct relational associations, entrepreneurial mindset is theorised to be positively associated with innovation. Leaders who recognise opportunities, tolerate ambiguity, and experiment with new approaches are not only inclined to develop novel ideas but are also more likely to promote and implement those ideas within their organisations, consistent with Innovation Diffusion Theory's framing of entrepreneurially oriented actors as the early adopters and champions of innovative practice within a social system (Rogers, 2003). This is documented by Santoso et al. (2023), who found that entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial culture had significant positive effects on collaborative innovation outcomes, and by Rahman, Widiyatmoko, and Rakhmansyah (2025), who demonstrated that entrepreneurial mindset significantly and positively influenced innovation among digital startups. We therefore hypothesise that:

H2: Entrepreneurial mindset is positively related to innovation among community-based organisations in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Innovation

Innovation refers to the development or adoption of new ideas, methods, products, services, or processes that improve the effectiveness and impact of social interventions (OECD, 2018; Crossan and Apaydin, 2010). Organisations that engage more actively in generating, promoting, and implementing new ideas are theorised to be associated with significantly greater social value, since innovation is the organisational pathway through which internal capabilities and intentions are linked to concrete improvements in community wellbeing. This is consistent with Álvarez-González, Barroso-Méndez, and Galera-Casquet (2023), who demonstrated that innovative orientation among nonprofit organisations significantly supports value co-creation that yields social welfare outcomes, and with Nahuche Bashir, Hassan, and Ismail (2024), who found that social innovation positively and significantly influences poverty alleviation outcomes in Zamfara State, Nigeria. We therefore hypothesise that:

H3: Innovation is positively related to social value creation among community-based organisations in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Since entrepreneurial mindset is theorised to be positively related to social value creation both directly and through its association with innovation, and innovation is theorised to be positively related to social value creation, innovation is positioned as the organisational pathway that accounts for part of the association between entrepreneurial mindset and social value creation. Leaders who possess a strong entrepreneurial mindset but whose organisations show limited innovative practice would, on this reasoning, report only a portion of the social value creation levels that their entrepreneurial orientation is otherwise associated with. This mediating architecture is consistent with Wang, Visvizi, and Lytras (2022), who empirically demonstrated that social entrepreneurship is associated with value creation largely through innovation, and with Kraa, Agyapong, Owusu, and Kwateng (2025), who found that entrepreneurial competence is not directly associated with social value unless it is linked through process innovation. We therefore hypothesise that:

H4: Innovation significantly mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial mindset and social value creation among community-based organisations in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

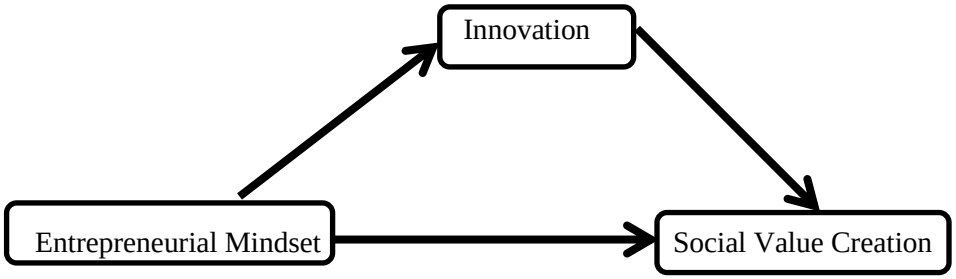


Figure: *Conceptual Framework*

Source: Adapted from Dees (1998), Mair and Marti (2006), and Rogers (2003); Researcher's Synthesis (2026)

Methodology

Population and Sample

The target population comprised the owners and managers of all 120 community-based organisations (CBOs) registered with the Nigeria Network of NGOs and operating within Kaduna State, Nigeria, as of 2025 (Nigeria Network of NGOs, 2025). Since the population was relatively small and fully accessible, a census approach was adopted rather than a probability sample, consistent with Creswell and Creswell's (2018) guidance that a census eliminates sampling error and improves accuracy when a population can be fully reached. CBOs were adopted as the unit of analysis, consistent with organisational-level research convention (Davidsson and Wiklund, 2007; Hitt et al., 2007). Of the 120 questionnaires distributed, 108 were returned (90.0 percent), and after screening for completeness, 102 valid responses were retained for analysis, representing a usable response rate of 85.0 percent.

Common Method Bias

Procedural safeguards were implemented to minimise common method bias, including physical separation of scale sections and the elimination of ambiguous item wording, since ambiguous items increase respondents' reliance on systematic response tendencies (Schaller, Patil, and Malhotra, 2015). Preliminary data screening in IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27 confirmed a complete data set with no missing values across all 22 indicators, no influential univariate or multivariate outliers (maximum Mahalanobis $D^2 = 12.14$ against a critical χ^2 of 16.27 at df = 3, $p < .001$), approximately normal distributions (skewness ranging from -0.341 to -0.289; kurtosis from 0.158 to 0.221), and non-significant deviation from linearity across all three pairwise construct relationships ($p > .05$), confirming the data set's suitability for variance-based structural equation modelling.

Measures

Social value creation, the dependent variable, was measured using 7 items adapted from the social entrepreneurial orientation scale developed by Hockerts (2017) and Lumpkin et al. (2013), capturing social innovation, social proactiveness, and social risk-taking, rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Entrepreneurial mindset, the independent variable, was measured using 8 items adapted from the Entrepreneurial Mindset Profile developed by Davis, Hall, and Mayer (2016), capturing opportunity recognition, tolerance for ambiguity, creativity, and risk propensity. Innovation, the mediating variable, was measured using 7 items adapted from the Innovative Work Behavior scale developed by Scott and Bruce (1994), capturing idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation. All three instruments returned outer loadings and internal consistency statistics exceeding accepted thresholds, reported in the Results section.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics and preliminary data screening were conducted in IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27, while Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS Version 4 was used to estimate the measurement and structural models, using bootstrapping of 5,000 subsamples for hypothesis testing. PLS-SEM was considered the most appropriate technique because it performs effectively even when data do not meet strict assumptions of normality, is well suited to theory-testing and prediction-oriented research in management studies, and enables the concurrent estimation of both the

measurement and structural models (Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt, 2022; Sarstedt, Ringle, and Hair, 2021).

Result

Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Descriptive statistical analysis conducted in IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27 on the 102 valid respondents is summarised in Table 1. Male respondents constituted 62.7 percent of the sample, reflecting broader organisational leadership patterns in Nigerian civil society (NBS, 2023). The largest age bracket was 28-37 years (36.3%), and 51.0 percent of respondents held a First Degree as their highest qualification, with a further 31.4 percent holding a Masters. Most CBOs had been in operation between 6 and 10 years (40.2%), reflecting an intermediate level of organisational maturity.

Table 1
Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics.

Variable	Category	Frequency (N = 102)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	64	62.7
	Female	38	37.3
Age (years)	18–27	16	15.7
	28–37	37	36.3
	38–47	32	31.4
	48 and above	17	16.6
Marital Status	Single	31	30.4
	Married	62	60.8
	Divorced	9	8.8
Qualification	Diploma	18	17.6
	First Degree	52	51.0
	Masters	32	31.4
Years CBO Operating	1–5 years	22	21.6
	6–10 years	41	40.2
	11–15 years	26	25.5
	Above 15 years	13	12.7

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Assessment of Measurement Model

The measurement model was specified as reflective and evaluated for indicator reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2022). All 22 items across the three constructs, Social Value Creation (7 items), Entrepreneurial Mindset (8 items), and Innovation (7 items), returned outer loadings ranging from 0.775 to 0.854, exceeding the 0.708 threshold. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Reliability and Convergent Validity of Study Constructs.

Construct	Items	Loading Range	Cronbach's Alpha	CR / AVE
Social Value Creation (SVC)	7	0.817–0.843	0.921	0.935 / 0.697
Entrepreneurial Mindset (EM)	8	0.775–0.819	0.934	0.946 / 0.629
Innovation (INN)	7	0.819–0.854	0.937	0.950 / 0.693

Thresholds: outer loading ≥ 0.708; Cronbach's alpha ≥ 0.70; CR 0.60–0.95; AVE ≥ 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022).

All three constructs comfortably exceeded the recommended thresholds, confirming that the measurement model is reliable and internally consistent. Discriminant validity was confirmed through the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio, which returned a maximum value of 0.741 (between Innovation and Social Value Creation), well below the conservative 0.85 threshold (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt, 2015); the HTMT ratio between Social Value Creation and Entrepreneurial Mindset was 0.712, and between Entrepreneurial Mindset and Innovation was 0.698. The measurement model therefore presents no reliability or validity concerns.

Assessment of Structural Model

Collinearity diagnostics returned variance inflation factor values not exceeding 1.603, below the 5.0 threshold, confirming that collinearity did not distort the structural estimates (Hair et al., 2022). Model fit was acceptable, with SRMR = 0.063 and NFI = 0.912, both within recommended thresholds. Path coefficients were assessed using bootstrapping with 5,000 sub-samples. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Path Coefficients — Direct and Indirect Effects.

Hyp	Path	β	T-Stat	P-Value	95% CI	Decision
H1	Entrepreneurial Mindset → Social Value Creation	0.342	4.187	<.001	[0.188, 0.491]	Supported
H2	Entrepreneurial Mindset → Innovation	0.614	7.923	<.001	[0.453, 0.762]	Supported
H3	Innovation → Social Value Creation	0.441	5.362	<.001	[0.284, 0.596]	Supported
H4	EM → INN → SVC (indirect)	0.271	4.812	<.001	[0.168, 0.389]	Partial mediation

Bootstrapping: 5,000 sub-samples; decision rule t ≥ 1.96, p ≤ 0.05, bias-corrected 95% CI excluding zero (Hair et al., 2022).

All four hypothesised relationships were supported. Entrepreneurial mindset was significantly associated with social value creation ($\beta = 0.342$, $p < .001$) and was significantly associated with innovation ($\beta = 0.614$, $p < .001$), the largest path coefficient in the model. Innovation, in turn, was significantly associated with social value creation ($\beta = 0.441$, $p < .001$), recording the largest direct effect size on social value creation ($f^2 = 0.294$, large) and making it the single strongest direct associate in the model. The indirect path from entrepreneurial mindset through innovation to social value creation was also significant ($\beta = 0.271$, $p < .001$; bias-corrected 95% CI [0.168, 0.389], excluding zero), and because the direct entrepreneurial-mindset-to-social-value-creation path remained significant after innovation was introduced, the mediation is classified as partial, with a Variance Accounted For of 44.2 percent (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Entrepreneurial mindset and innovation jointly explained 62.1 percent of the variance in social value creation ($R^2 = 0.621$, substantial), while entrepreneurial mindset alone explained 37.7 percent of the variance in innovation ($R^2 = 0.377$, moderate). Effect sizes confirmed entrepreneurial mindset as the dominant predictor of innovation ($f^2 = 0.601$, large), while its direct contribution to social value creation was comparatively modest ($f^2 = 0.183$, medium). Predictive relevance was confirmed for both endogenous constructs ($Q^2 = 0.241$ for innovation; $Q^2 = 0.379$ for social value creation).

Discussion

A parsimonious mediation model was proposed to understand social value creation among CBOs in Kaduna State via the predictive role of entrepreneurial mindset and the intervening role of innovation. We hypothesised a direct and an indirect relationship, underpinned by Social Entrepreneurship Theory and Innovation Diffusion Theory. For H1, hypothesising a direct link between entrepreneurial mindset and social value creation, the finding was supported: CBO leaders who exhibit stronger opportunity recognition, cognitive adaptability, creativity, and calculated risk-taking report significantly higher levels of social value creation, consistent with Kruse et al. (2020) and Makuya and Changalima (2024). The medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.183$) indicates that while the direct relationship is significant, innovation plays an important complementary role in the model.

The finding for H2, that entrepreneurial mindset is significantly associated with innovation, was the strongest direct relationship in the model ($\beta = 0.614$) and is consistent with the interpretation that CBO leaders with strong entrepreneurial orientations are more likely to generate, promote, and implement new ideas within their organisations, consistent with Innovation Diffusion Theory's framing of entrepreneurially oriented actors as early adopters and champions of innovative practice (Rogers, 2003). This result aligns with Santoso et al. (2023) and Rahman, Widiyatmoko, and Rakhmansyah (2025), and underscores entrepreneurial mindset's dominant role in shaping the innovation capacity of Kaduna State's CBOs, where limited funding and institutional constraints necessitate creative resource mobilisation and adaptive service delivery.

The finding for H3 confirms that innovation contributes meaningfully to social value creation, recording the largest direct effect size in the model. This is consistent with Social Entrepreneurship Theory's framing of social entrepreneurship as a process rooted in social innovation (Mair and Marti, 2006), and resonates with Álvarez-González et al. (2023), who demonstrated that innovative orientation among nonprofit organisations significantly supports value co-creation yielding social welfare outcomes, and with Nahuche Bashir et al. (2024), who found that social innovation positively and significantly influenced poverty alleviation outcomes in Zamfara State, a finding directly comparable to the Kaduna State context.

The significant partial mediation confirmed under H4 justifies the theoretical integration of Social Entrepreneurship Theory and Innovation Diffusion Theory: entrepreneurial mindset is positively related to social value creation both directly, through the cognitive and motivational orientations with which it is associated, and indirectly, through the innovative work behaviours with which it is linked. CBO leaders in Kaduna State who are highly entrepreneurially minded but whose organisations show limited innovative practice appear to report only a portion of the social value creation levels their leadership is otherwise associated with, a pattern consistent with Wang, Visvizi, and Lytras (2022) and Kraa et al. (2025).

Implications of Findings

The study makes a modest theoretical contribution by integrating Social Entrepreneurship Theory with Innovation Diffusion Theory, demonstrating that entrepreneurial cognition is most strongly associated with social value creation through the innovative work behaviours with which it is linked, rather than through direct associations alone. Practically, the findings imply that capacity-building interventions confined to entrepreneurial mindset development, without a parallel investment in organisational innovation processes, are associated with only part of the social value creation levels observed when both are present. CBOs and their donor partners in Kaduna State should therefore pursue entrepreneurial mindset development, structured programmes covering opportunity recognition, creativity, and calculated risk-taking, and innovation process strengthening, dedicated idea generation sessions, cross-team collaboration platforms, and structured pathways for testing and implementing new approaches, as an integrated strategy rather than as separate interventions, since innovation is essential to maximising and sustaining the association between entrepreneurial mindset and social value creation.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies

This study makes a modest contribution to understanding social value creation among community-based organisations, though not without limitations. The cross-sectional survey design limits the ability to establish causal directionality with certainty, as data were collected at a single point in time and cannot capture the longitudinal dynamics through which entrepreneurial mindset cumulatively builds innovation capacity and social value over time. Although PLS-SEM is robust to certain data conditions, formal endogeneity diagnostics (such as Gaussian copula analysis) were not conducted; potential endogeneity arising from reverse causality or omitted variables is therefore acknowledged as a limitation. The study relied on self-reported questionnaire responses from CBO owners and managers, introducing the potential for social desirability bias, and is contextually confined to registered CBOs in Kaduna State, limiting direct generalisability to other Nigerian states or sub-Saharan African contexts, although the theoretical associations identified are expected to be relevant across comparable organisational environments. The total sample of 102 usable responses, while adequate for PLS-SEM estimation, also limits the precision of parameter estimates. Future researchers might extend this model through a longitudinal panel design, replicate it across CBOs in other Nigerian states, examine moderating variables such as organisational learning culture and access to technology, and incorporate objective performance data alongside self-reported measures to provide a more complete mapping of how entrepreneurial mindset is associated with social value in the Nigerian community-based organisation sector.

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