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The Need for Sustainable Solutions to Social Problems Through Social Entrepreneurship in South West Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the evolving needs of social entrepreneurship in providing sustainable solutions to social problems in South West Nigeria. A quantitative research approach and descriptive survey method were adopted. Data for the study were gathered using structured questionnaire from 507 household respondents including Community Development Association (CDA) leaders in South West Nigeria. Descriptive statistics and SEM-PLS were utilised for the analysis of data. The findings revealed that a significant relationship exists between social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development. The study recommends that social enterprises should implement effective social entrepreneurship activities in their organisational models to enhance their social impact.

KEYWORDS

Social entrepreneurship; social mission; social value creation; sustainable community development; South West Nigeria

Introduction

Sustainable solutions to social problems in Nigeria have long been a vital strategy for fostering economic and social progress, especially in rural areas and marginalised urban communities (Hart 2024). In recent times, sustainable community development has emerged as one of the best measures to determine how sustainable solutions are provided to social problems (Kamaludeen, Xavier, and Amin 2024). At its core, sustainable community development involves empowering local populations to improve their economic, social, and environmental well-being; by leveraging available resources and collective action. The concept gained significant traction during the colonial period and has since evolved to reflect contemporary development goals, such as sustainability, poverty reduction and social equity (Akamike and Okonkwo 2024).

In recent years, community development in Nigeria has shifted towards more sustainable methods, emphasising renewable energy, environmental preservation and economic empowerment through education, entrepreneurship, and agriculture. Nigeria's development agenda has been influenced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nation, which promote the incorporation of sustainability into community development strategies.

Currently in Nigeria, social problems such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, healthcare, illiteracy and gender inequality have contributed a negative impacts to the well-being and lives of people in the communities (Obute 2021; Ogbari et al. 2024; Prince et al. 2023). However, the Nigerian government's initiatives, such as National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), YouWin Program and National Social Investment Programmes (NSIP), aimed at fostering entrepreneurship development and communities' well-being, have failed to critically examine and develop structures for social entrepreneurship that will in turn leads to social value creation and sustainable development. Thus, sustainable solutions to social problems are increasingly recognised as functions of social entrepreneurship, which encompasses elements, such as social mission, change making and social value creation.

The advancements achieved in reducing poverty and unemployment in Nigeria throughout the long years of democratic rule since 1960 are most prominently observed in the government's endeavours towards redistributive actions, especially investments in essential services like sanitation, electricity and housing (Ayodeji and Adebayo 2015; Prince et al. 2023). Additionally, significant financial allocations have been directed towards social wages, including provision for healthcare services, education, as well as social, transportation and municipal infrastructures (Prince et al. 2023).

Despite these attempts, sustainable solutions to social problems in Nigeria have sometimes been plagued by poor policy execution, weak governance, corruption and inadequate funding (Nwogbo and Ighodalo 2021). The disconnection between policy formulation at the national level and grassroots implementation remains a significant challenge. Nigeria continues to face significant social challenges that hinder effective community development, such as widespread poverty, infrastructural deficits, governance failures and, in many regions, insecurity due to terrorism, ethnic conflicts and banditry. Rural communities often lack access to basic services, such as clean water, healthcare and education (Abdulraheem, Olapipo, and Amodu 2012; Arimoro and Musa 2020), while urban communities struggle with problems like overcrowding, unemployment and poor housing conditions (Jiboye, Adebayo, and Obakin 2020; Yakubu, Olonilebi, and Isah 2021). In light of sluggish economic progress, soaring unemployment rates and high level of poverty in Nigeria (Odalonu 2022), social entrepreneurship emerges as a crucial remedy for addressing unemployment, poverty and social development.

A number of studies have been conducted to analyse the present role and status of social enterprise in Nigeria, focusing on areas, such as health service provision, poverty alleviation, employment generation and organisational performance (Kim et al. 2023; Molecke and Pinkse 2017; Odumosu et al. 2020). However, studies on the impact of social entrepreneurship on sustainable community development in South-western Nigeria remain limited. Furthermore, most existing studies have relied primarily on data from social enterprises or entrepreneurs (Kiladze et al. 2023), Kim et al. 2023; Premadasa et al. 2023; often neglecting the perspectives of community members directly affected by these enterprises' activities. Very few studies, such as Mosotoane (2022) and Mahboob, Rasool, and Ishtiaq (2023) have gathered data from household populations to assess the effects of social entrepreneurship on sustainable community development. To date, no such study has been conducted specifically in South-western Nigeria. Thus, this serves as the crux of this study, a major gap which

the study aims to shed light on through empirical investigation. Hence, this study addresses the following central research question: 'To what extent has social entrepreneurship contributed in attaining sustainable solutions to social problems in South West Nigeria?'

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Social entrepreneurs, unlike typical business entrepreneurs who prioritise corporate profits, have the primary goal of advancing economic and social utility (Eldar 2020). This involves devising strategies to ensure economic returns that serve social objectives (Hidalgo, Monticelli, and Vargas Bortolaso 2024). The fundamental aim of a social enterprise is to generate economic value to fulfil social purposes and establish a cyclical structure where profits are reinvested to enhance social values. Therefore, the concept of social entrepreneurship revolves around the sustainable operation of social enterprises within competitive and unpredictable market environments by integrating social missions or objectives with essential corporate management principles and strategies (Battilana et al. 2015). Social entrepreneurship represents a fusion of economic and social values that effectively balances public interest with profit-seeking motives, ultimately contributing positively to the longevity and resilience of social enterprises.

Social entrepreneurship is steered by individuals known as social entrepreneurs, delineated by Dees (1998) as cited in Kim et al. (2023) as catalysts for change within the social domain as follows:

- i. Embracing a mission to foster and maintain social values (beyond mere individual gain);
- ii. Identifying and actively pursuing opportunities that are new to serve that mission;
- iii. Participating in an ongoing cycle of innovation, learning and adaptation;
- iv. Taking decisive actions unhindered by current resource constraints;
- v. Demonstrating a heightened sense of accountability to the communities served and the outcomes realised.

Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is characterised by the exploration of novel resolutions to social, environmental or cultural issues (Hidalgo, Monticelli, and Vargas Bortolaso 2024; Kamaludeen, Xavier, and Amin 2024). Social entrepreneurs, whether individuals or entities, utilise commercial principles and methodologies to tackle societal dilemmas in a sustainable and impactful manner (Kumar and Yadav 2023). They aim to generate social impact through the creation of innovative models, goods or services that enhance the well-being of underprivileged communities, advocate for social equity or advance environmental preservation. In contrast to conventional entrepreneurs

who are mainly concerned with maximising profits, social entrepreneurs place a strong emphasis on social or environmental goals alongside financial viability (Vidovic 2023).

Social entrepreneurship remains ambiguously defined despite its growing popularity, and the demarcations with related fields of inquiry are indistinct (Rivna and Gress 2023). Varied interpretations exist among different scholars. According to Silva et al. (2023), Kamaludeen, Xavier, and Amin (2024) and Schumpeter (1934), social entrepreneurship can be perceived as a mechanism for generating value through the novel recombination of resources. These resource combinations can be leveraged to capitalise on prospects for generating social value through catalysing social change or fulfilling social necessities.

In the realm of social entrepreneurship, it is crucial to recognise the three sectors in which entrepreneurs may operate:

- i. The private sector: This sector, also known as the business sector or profit sector, pertains to the economic domain that prioritises profit-generating activities aimed at accruing wealth for the shareholders or owners.
- ii. The public sector: This sector, also known as the government sector or state sector, denotes the segment of the economy overseen by the government, dedicated to implementing governmental policies.
- iii. The voluntary sector: This sector, is also known as the third sector, the social sector, the citizen sector or the non-profit sector. The sector represents the portion of the economy oriented towards non-profit initiatives and heavily reliant on voluntary assistance for sustenance. Organisations in this sector are driven by altruistic motives rather than profit-making and shareholder interests.

The existing literature on social entrepreneurship reflects definitions that encompass these three sectors. Scholars have underscored that the delineations between public, private and voluntary sectors are becoming less distinct (Calo, Sancino, and Scognamiglio 2024; Kamaludin 2022; Pusz, Jonas, and Deutz 2024). With an increasing prevalence of collaborations across private, public and voluntary sectors (Scuotto, Cicillin, and Consiglio 2023; Teasdale et al. 2023), it becomes challenging to confine specific actors to a single sector, including social entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, it is widely acknowledged that the primary domain of social entrepreneurship is the voluntary sector (Kamaludeen, Xavier, and Amin 2024; Sousa-Filho and Almeida 2024). Civic engagement often emerges due to societal voids created by inadequate public systems or private sector initiatives, thereby laying the groundwork for the so-called third sector. To establish the backdrop for social entrepreneurship, a contextual understanding of the prevailing developments in the voluntary sector is imperative.

Social Entrepreneurship in Nigeria: Contextual Overview

The emergence of social entrepreneurship in Nigeria is contextualised by the country's historical and socioeconomic challenges (Wale-Oshinowo et al. 2019). Nigeria faces significant development issues, such as poverty, unemployment and corruption, despite

extensive development efforts (Prince et al. 2023). These enduring socio-economic issues have led to the rise of non-state actors due to state inefficiencies. With over 63% of the population in multidimensional poverty (National Bureau of Statistics 2023) and unemployment over 30%, social entrepreneurship presents an innovative alternative for addressing critical social issues.

Several key factors have driven the expansion of social entrepreneurship in Nigeria. A significant factor is the large, young population, over 70% of whom are under the age of 30, facing underemployment and limited opportunities. Inadequate public services and governance failures have motivated individuals and organisations to create market-based solutions (Nwokorie 2017). Additionally, technological advancements in mobile and digital sectors have enabled scalable service delivery in education, healthcare and agriculture (Olurinola et al. 2021). Furthermore, the Nigerian diaspora and returnee entrepreneurs contribute fresh capital and global best practices (Ojo, Nwankwo, and Gbadamosi 2013).

Social enterprises in Nigeria engage in various sectors, primarily targeting underserved populations. For example, in education, Slum2School aids marginalised children, while Lifebank connects hospitals with medical supplies in healthcare. Farmcrowdy facilitates crowd-sourced investment in agriculture to improve productivity and inclusion. Fintech innovations like PiggyVest enhance savings and investment access for low-income individuals, demonstrating social entrepreneurship's versatility (Wale-Oshinowo et al. 2019).

Despite its importance, social entrepreneurship in Nigeria encounters considerable challenges. Financing limitations significantly hinder social entrepreneurs' access to grants, loans or investments due to inadequate financial infrastructures and low investor interest (Gumel and Bardai 2021). The absence of a specific legal framework for social enterprises often compels them to register as NGOs or small businesses, each presenting distinct limitations (Miri 2019). Additional challenges include low public awareness, insufficient policy support and institutional inefficiencies that compromise operational effectiveness (Okpara and Halkias 2011).

The landscape of social entrepreneurship offers significant potential in Nigeria. Therefore, implementing supportive policies can improve the viability and effectiveness of social enterprises (Osabohien et al. 2023). Collaborative efforts among different sectors can foster innovation, attract funding and promote skills enhancement. Incorporating social enterprise concepts into educational programs can nurture socially conscious entrepreneurs, while technology facilitates outreach to underserved populations (Amadi et al. 2022). With appropriate strategies and support, social entrepreneurship can significantly aid inclusive and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Sustainable Community Development

The concept of sustainable community development is perceived as a social endeavour that enables communities to collaborate, strategise and implement plans to achieve development objectives and enhance human capabilities (Westoby and Botes, 2013). Westoby and Botes (2013) emphasise the existence of diverse traditions, methodologies and approaches to community development, while still adhering to fundamental

principles, such as collective action, engagement, empowerment, raising awareness among stakeholders and forming partnerships. According to Phillips and Pittman (2009), community development involves planned efforts to build assets that empower residents to enhance their quality of life. These assets may encompass various forms of community capital, including physical, human, social, economic and environmental resources.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

This study draws on the core dimensions of social entrepreneurship to explore their influence on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria. In particular, it examines how social mission, social change making and social value creation each contribute to enhancing community well-being, employment generation and educational empowerment.

Social Mission and Sustainable Community Development

The overarching social mission that characterises a social enterprise is predominantly centred on maximising the social benefits and advantages for the targeted communities (Aliu et al. 2025). The enhancement of social values to fulfil the overarching social mission, is recognised as both a central and distinctive characteristic that differentiates a social entrepreneur from their counterparts in traditional business environment (Muñoz and Kimmitt 2019; Weber, Kroger, and Lambrich 2012). Social mission is inherently oriented towards addressing imperative social necessities that encompass a wide array of domains, including healthcare, welfare, environmental challenges and education, areas in which the efforts of governmental or private entities may fall short or be insufficiently addressed (Lepoutre et al. 2013).

In the context of sustainable community development, a clearly defined social mission can drive initiatives that foster community well-being, promote educational empowerment and generate employment opportunities. These outcomes are essential indicators of sustainable development (Phillips and Pittman 2009). Thus, the study developed the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1 (H_0): Social mission has no significant effect on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria.

Social Change Making and Sustainable Community Development

The ultimate aspiration of social initiatives is to catalyse transformative changes within the broader ecosystem in which they operate (Kamaludeen, Xavier, and Amin 2024). The pressing necessity to rectify and address the social disparities that have been systematically overlooked or neglected by governmental entities, serves as the primary impetus for initiating the requisite changes deemed essential for fostering equitable social development (Alegre, Kislenko, and Berbegal-Mirabent 2017).

Through active social change making processes, such as innovation, inclusive participation democratic decision making and advocacy, social entrepreneurs contribute

to building community capacities and fostering inclusive growth. These changes can directly improve access to educational resources, enhance employment opportunities and promote social wellbeing, thereby contributing to sustainable community development. Hence, the study developed the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2 (H_0): Social change making has no significant effect on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria.

Social Value Creation and Sustainable Community Development

Social entrepreneurs notably differentiate themselves from other categories of entrepreneurs by ascribing a significantly higher level of importance to the process of creating social value (Mair and Martí 2006). Social value is intimately connected to community welfare advancements and the implementation of positive transformative actions essential for nurturing social growth (Korneeva, Alekseeva, and Cheremukhina 2024). These include the cultivation of social innovations and establishment of entirely new entities designed to specifically address the unmet and pressing social needs of the communities through the co-creation of value with community stakeholders. Thus, the study developed the third hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 (H_0): Social value creation has no significant effect on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria.

The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Resource-based view (RBV). As a mechanism for an organisation's sustainable practices, the RBV explained better performance of an organisation to the possession and control of distinguishing quantity of resources.

The idea of Penrose, Schumpeter and Ricardo for long-term competitive advantage through the use of strategic resources served as the foundation for the development of the RBV (Acar and Polin 2015). The focus of the resource-based approach is on the attributes of resources and strategies that are necessary for long-term performance,

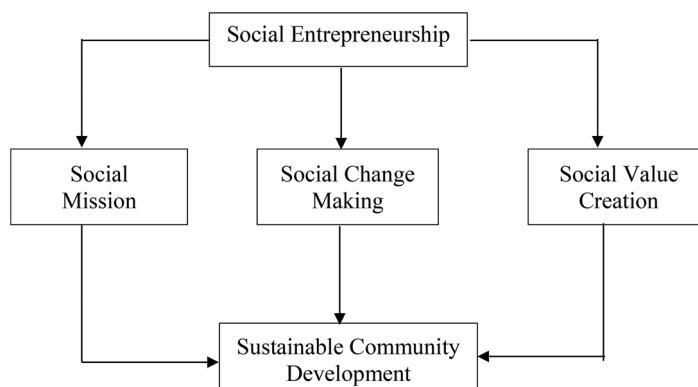


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for this study. Source: Author.

competitive advantage and organisational survival (Barney 1991). Capabilities and resources are viewed as the sources of excellent company success. According to the RBV, resources are stationary within enterprises and heterogeneously distributed within them (Barney 2001). The strategic elements that affect the company are known as external variables. These include other stakeholders, including suppliers, purchasers, the level of competition and the structure of the market and industry (Porter 1985). Both the conception and the deployment of resources are impacted by these considerations. Businesses that meet the criteria for VRIN (valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources) are capable of attaining high performance, according to the resource-based paradigm.

Materials and Methods

Data Source

Data from regular households in South West Nigeria were gathered for the study using a quantitative research approach and descriptive survey method. The South West region, often hyphenated as the South-West, constitutes one of the six geopolitical divisions of Nigeria, embodying both a geographical and political entity within Nigeria's southwest. The target population included household members who met at least one of the following criteria: (i) a Community Development Associations (CDA) leader, (ii) a beneficiary of a social enterprise or (iii) an individual with awareness of social enterprise activities.

Using Yamani's formula (Yamani, 1967), a sample size of 400 was determined from the total population of 9,773,484 regular households in South West Nigeria (National Bureau of Statistics 2023). A 30% buffer was added to improve the study's robustness and adequate representation of respondents in the study area, and to further account for the non-response rate, which has been found to be typically common in social science research in Nigeria (Asikhia and Naidoo 2020), bringing the total sample size to 520. Thus, 520 regular households were chosen using a proportionate sampling technique to allocate the sample across the six states, based on the number of regular households in each.

In gathering data for the study, the collection team visited regular households across the six states by firstly administering a brief screening question to identify whether any household member fit at least one of the three inclusion criteria. If none of the household members met the eligibility criteria, the household was excluded and another eligible household in the same area was identified as a replacement. This approach ensured that responses were gathered exclusively from households with relevant experience or awareness of social entrepreneurship, thereby enhancing the validity of responses. A structured questionnaire on the need for social entrepreneurship adapted from the Global Social Enterprise survey, was used in gathering the data for the study. The sample size was composed of three distinct respondent types in each state as presented in [Table 1](#). Thus, the sample size comprises 132 CDA leaders, 226 social enterprise beneficiaries and 161 individuals who are aware of social enterprise activities.

This sampling approach ensured that each respondent had relevant engagement with or awareness of social enterprise activities, thereby providing informed responses to the study's questions.

Data Analysis Techniques

Both Structural Equation Modelling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) and descriptive statistics were used for the analysis of the data. SEM-PLS was used to determine the level of relationship between social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development, while descriptive analysis was used to describe the general characteristics and patterns of the variables.

Variable Specification and Measurement

The independent variable for the study is social entrepreneurship which is measured using social mission, social change making and social value creation. The dependent variable for the study is sustainable community development. Sustainable community development was measured using community wellbeing and employment generation.

Model Specification of the Study

The specification of the models for achieving the objectives based on the SEM-PLS regression equation by Chen (2018) is as follows:

For the overall objective of the study

$$SCD=f(SE) \quad (1)$$

$$SCD=\beta_0+\beta_1SM+\beta_2SCM+\beta_3SCV+\mu \quad (2)$$

where SM=Social Mission

SCM=Social Change Making

SCV=Social Value Creation

SCD=Sustainable Community Development

Table 1. Regular household distribution by state and type.

S/N	State	Number of regular households	Sample size	CDA leaders	Social enterprise beneficiaries	Aware of SE activities	Total
1	Lagos	3,400,042	180	56	72	52	180
2	Oyo	1,932,566	103	24	43	36	103
3	Ogun	1,364,094	73	16	32	25	73
4	Ondo	1,181,460	63	9	24	30	63
5	Osun	1,130,817	60	16	34	10	60
6	Ekiti	764,505	41	11	21	8	41
	Total	9,773,484	520	132	226	161	520
		100%		25%	44%	31%	

Source: Author's computation.

Model 1: For the first hypothesis

$$SCD=f(SM) \quad (3)$$

where SCD=Sustainable community development

SM=Social mission

Therefore,

$$SCD=\beta_0 + \beta_1 SM + \mu \quad (4)$$

Model 2: For the second hypothesis

$$SCD=f(SCM) \quad (5)$$

where SCM=Social change mission

Therefore,

$$SCD=\beta_0 + \beta_1 SCM + \mu \quad (6)$$

Model 3: For the third hypothesis

$$SCD=f(SCV) \quad (7)$$

where SCD=Sustainable community development

SCV=Social value creation

Therefore,

$$SCD=\beta_0 + \beta_1 SVC + \mu \quad (8)$$

Results

Response Rate

The study administered 520 questionnaires to the regular household population in South West Nigeria. A total of 512 questionnaires were retrieved during the study survey. In assessing and coding the questionnaire for analysis, 507 out of the questionnaires retrieved were found to be valid and were used for the analysis. Consequently, the study's valid response rate was calculated to be 97.5%, showing that the study instrument has a high level of data integrity.

Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

Table 2 reveals the numbers of observations across 507 survey respondents. The variables mean score observed falls between 4.017 and 4.097, which depicts that the respondents for the survey generally have a positive perception of the variables. The mean score was highest for social change making, indicating that the respondents have strong support for social change.

The standard deviations for each variable in the distribution's dispersion range from 0.805 to 0.887. This consistency suggests a similar degree of response variability. The fact that there was so little variation suggests that respondents' evaluations were generally in agreement with the mean. All of the variables in the distribution shape have negative skewness, with values between -1.595 and -2.027. This supports the general positive tendencies seen in the mean values by indicating that most participants gave ratings on the higher end of the scale. Furthermore, all of the kurtosis values, which range from 2.707 to 4.017, are positive, suggesting that the distributions are leptokurtic. The implication of the statistical variable result suggests responses are at the higher end (4 or 5). Moreover, severe skewness may lead to biased estimates and reduce the predictive accuracy of models. Thus, bootstrapping in SEM-PLS was used to mitigate the issues related to non-normality.

Assessment of PLS-SEM Path Model Results

This study embraced the two-step methodology as advocated by Schuberth, Rademaker, and Henseler (2023) for the evaluation and reporting of the outcomes of PLS-SEM path models. The two-step approach comprises the following:

- i. The assessment of measurement model
- ii. The assessment of structural model

Assessment of the Measurement Model

Figure 2 presents a summary of the results of the PLS-SEM analysis between the variables of social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development.

Reliability and Validity of Research Instrument

The outer loadings of each measure (item) of each construct should be examined in order to evaluate the individual item reliability by the literature guidelines (Hair et al. 2012). In PLS-SEM analysis, a loading of 0.7 (70%) is an acceptable threshold (Afthanorhan et al. 2021), while values greater than 0.95 are undesirable (Hair et al. 2012). Thus, the factor loading for all items under all constructs is higher than the 0.7 minimum threshold value and lower than 0.95, which shows that the instrument scale through the indicator reliability test.

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of correlation was determined as shown in Table 2. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient less than 0.7 indicates that the internal consistency or

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variables.

Variables	Mean	Median	Observed min	Observed max	Std. Dev.	Excess kurtosis	Skewness	N
SCM	4.097	4.333	1.000	5.000	0.881	3.963	-1.949	507
SM	4.095	4.333	1.000	5.000	0.887	4.017	-2.027	507
SVC	4.017	4.333	1.000	5.000	0.837	2.707	-1.595	507
SCD	4.039	4.333	1.000	5.000	0.805	3.373	-1.817	507

Source: Author's computation.

reliability of the items in the scale is low, still greater than 0.7 is considered satisfactory or good and greater than 0.8 is considered excellent (Kaviani Broujeni et al. 2021). Thus, the study's instrument's reliability statistics showed a Cronbach's Alpha value which indicated an excellent level of internal consistency.

Furthermore, the cross loading, Fornell–Larcker criterion and the composite reliability were used to assess discriminant validity. The cross-loading criterion states that each item loading should be higher on its parent construct than on the constructs with a threshold of 0.7 (Jordan and Spiess 2019). Thus, all loading of the indicators should be greater than the cross-loading (Lim 2024). Table 5 reveals that each loading of the indicator is greater than the cross-loading. Therefore, all constructs satisfy the requirement for discriminant validity.

Moreover, the Fornell–Larcker criterion requires the square root of AVE to be above the correlations of the latent variables under construct. As a result, all constructs meet the requirement for discriminant validity because each square root of the AVE is greater than the correlations of the latent variables underlying as shown in Table 5. Tables 3–5 present the reliability and validity test results conducted and the cross-loading criterion for discriminant validity.

Multicollinearity Assessment

In SEM, especially when using PLS-SEM, assessing multicollinearity is a critical preliminary step to ensure the validity and reliability of model estimates (Hair and Alamer 2022). A VIF value of 1 indicates no multicollinearity, values between 1 and 5 suggest moderate but acceptable levels, while values exceeding 5 signal potential multicollinearity issues that require careful attention (Hair et al. 2019).

Table 6 presents the collinearity statistics of the inner model of each construct used for the study.

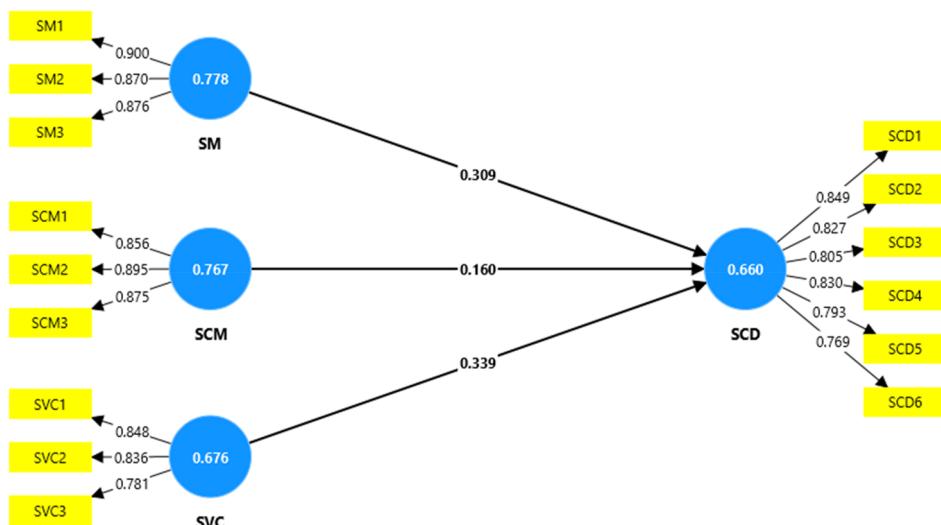


Figure 2. Assessment of measurement model. Source: Author's computation.

Table 3. Reliability and convergence validity.

Construct	Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Social community development	SCD1	0.849	0.897	0.921	0.660
	SCD2	0.827			
	SCD3	0.805			
	SCD4	0.830			
	SCD5	0.793			
	SCD6	0.769			
Social change making	SCM1	0.856	0.848	0.908	0.767
	SCM2	0.895			
	SCM3	0.875			
Social mission	SM1	0.900	0.857	0.913	0.778
	SM2	0.870			
	SM3	0.876			
Social value creation	SVC1	0.848	0.760	0.862	0.676
	SVC2	0.836			
	SVC3	0.781			

Source: Author's computation.

Table 4. Cross-loading criterion to discriminant validity.

Item	SCD	SCM	SM	SVC
SCD1	0.849	0.617	0.636	0.661
SCD2	0.827	0.565	0.579	0.583
SCD3	0.805	0.549	0.568	0.584
SCD4	0.830	0.575	0.606	0.612
SCD5	0.793	0.503	0.525	0.522
SCD6	0.769	0.538	0.557	0.527
SCM1	0.585	0.856	0.680	0.693
SCM2	0.628	0.895	0.752	0.731
SCM3	0.594	0.875	0.715	0.709
SM1	0.655	0.739	0.900	0.720
SM2	0.605	0.699	0.870	0.709
SM3	0.627	0.725	0.876	0.708
SVC1	0.630	0.718	0.703	0.848
SVC2	0.596	0.682	0.682	0.836
SVC3	0.543	0.596	0.603	0.781

Source: Author's computation.

Table 5. Fornell–Larcker criterion result.

	SCD	SCM	SM	SVC	Condition for discriminant validity met? ($\sqrt{AVE} > \text{the latent variable correlation?}$)
SCD	0.813				Yes
SCM	0.688	0.876			Yes
SM	0.714	0.818	0.882		Yes
SVC	0.719	0.812	0.807	0.822	Yes

Source: Author's computation.

Table 6. Collinearity statistics (VIF) – inner model list.

	VIF
SCM → SCD	3.772
SM → SCD	3.691
SVC → SCD	3.590

Source: Author's computation.

Table 6 reveals that all inner VIFs range from 3.590 to 3.772, suggesting a moderate multicollinearity, which is acceptable, indicating no serious problematic collinearity among the constructs (Kim 2019).

Assessment of Structural Model

After a thorough examination of the measurement model, the study examined the structural model. To ascertain the importance of the path coefficients, this study used a typical bootstrapping approach with 5,000 bootstrap samples. This was accomplished by adhering to the guidelines made by the recent research (Cheung et al. 2024; Nitzl, Roldan, and Cepeda 2016). Figure 1 shows the graphical representation of results of the SEM-PLS analysis (bootstrapping) between the variables of social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development.

Figure 3 presents the model fit of the study that is used in achieving the overall objective of the study. The result shows that a significant relationship exists between social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development ($R^2 = 0.575$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.572$ and significant at 0.000). The result from the whole model shows that both social entrepreneurship variables and sustainable community development are related at $p < 0.05$ and these variables (social mission, social change making and social value creation) contribute 57.5% of the variation in sustainable community development in South West Nigeria. However, 42.5% of other variables that are not captured in this model contribute to the sustainable community development in South West Nigeria.

Summary of Path Coefficients

This section presents the analysis of the direct effect at $p < 0.05$ as shown in Table 7, which is used in testing the hypothesis of the study.

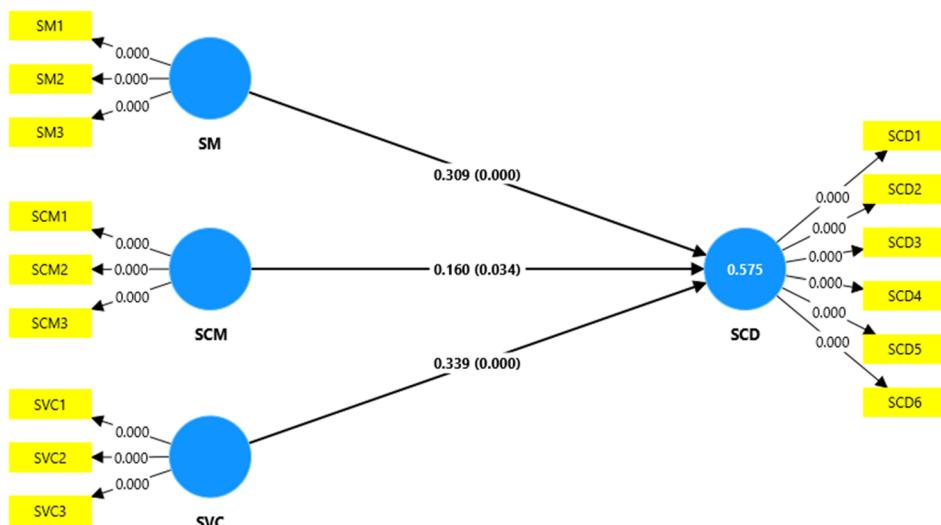


Figure 3. SEM-PLS analysis of the study. Source: Author's computation.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 7 shows the path coefficients result that is used in testing the level of relationship between social entrepreneurship variables and sustainable community development.

H₀: Social Mission has no Significant Effect on Sustainable Community Development in South West Nigeria

The findings revealed a path coefficient of 0.309 with a *p* value of 0.000, which is positively related and statistically significant at *p*<0.05. This implies that a significant relationship exists between social mission and sustainable community development. Therefore, an increase in a unit of social mission will result in a corresponding 0.309 units in SCD. Given this statistical relationship between social mission and SCD, the null hypothesis, which states that; Social mission has no significant effect on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria, is rejected at the 0.05 significance level because the *p* value is less than the 0.05 significance level, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H₀: Social Change Making has no Significant Effect on Sustainable Community Development in South West Nigeria

The findings revealed a path coefficient of 0.160 with a *p* value of 0.034, which is positively related and statistically significant at *p*<0.05, although the level of significance is not strong. This implies that significant relationship exists between social change-making and sustainable community development. Therefore, an increase in a unit of social change making can only result in a corresponding 0.160 units in SCD. Given this statistical relationship between social change making and SCD, the null hypothesis, which states that; Social change making has no significant effect on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria, is rejected at the 0.05 significance level, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H₀: Social Value Creation has no Significant Effect on Sustainable Community Development in South West Nigeria

The findings revealed a path coefficient of 0.333 with a *p* value of 0.000, which is positively related and statistically significant at *p*<0.05. This implies that a significant relationship exists between social value creation and sustainable community development. Therefore, an increase in a unit of social mission will result in a corresponding 0.309 units in SCD. Given this statistical relationship between social value creation

Table 7. Summary of path coefficients.

Path	Coefficient (0)	t-Statistic	<i>p</i> Value	Significance (<i>p</i> <0.05)?	95% Confidence interval (with bias correction)
SCM → SCD	0.160	2.126	0.034	Yes	[0.005, 0.302]
SM → SCD	0.309	4.268	0.000	Yes	[0.171, 0.450]
SVC → SCD	0.339	4.814	0.000	Yes	[0.200, 0.477]

t-Statistic > 1.96 and *p* value < 0.05 indicate statistical significance.

and SCD, the null hypothesis, which states that: Social value creation has no significant effect on sustainable community development in South West Nigeria, is rejected at the 0.05 significance level because the *p* value is less than the 0.05 significance level, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The SEM-PLS result shows the complex relationship that exists between the variables of social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development. The findings from the SEM-PLS indicate that social mission significantly influences sustainable community development in South West Nigeria. Thus, the answer to the question raised is that the social mission of social entrepreneurship contributes to attaining sustainable solutions to social problems in South West Nigeria. A social mission geared towards enhancing well-being and providing employment opportunities to the communities, most especially the rural dwellers, helps in developing a fundamental approach to solving social problems that persist in the communities. Therefore, motivating social entrepreneurs or groups of entrepreneurs to engage in social mission initiatives can enhance sustainable community development. This finding is in line with the study conducted by Liudmyla (2022), who opined that social mission of social entrepreneurship contributes significantly in achieving social development in Ukraine. Additionally, this finding supports Olayinka, Olusegun, and Babatunde (2015) and Ijiwole (2019) studies, which provide empirical evidence that social entrepreneurship's social mission can lead to poverty reduction in Nigeria.

The findings further reveal that a significant relationship exists between social change making and sustainable community development at $p < 0.05$, although the level of effect is very small and not strong. Thus, social change making has a minor contribution in providing sustainable solution to social problems in South West Nigeria. To strengthen this relationship, social entrepreneurs must enhance their level of networking with the communities through partnership and community engagement (Sánchez-Soriano et al. 2024). Making positive social changes may require a perception best suited to the communities that the changes will affect. This finding corroborates the study conducted by Aini, Yuliaji, and Nafisa (2023), who opined that social entrepreneurship demonstrates a transformational approach to achieving social change making in order to provide sustainable solutions to social problems and community development.

In addition, the findings of this study demonstrated that a significant relationship exists between social value creation and sustainable community development. Among the variables tested, social value creation has the strongest and most significant impact on sustainable community development, indicating a greater capacity in providing sustainable solutions to social problems in South West Nigeria. Thus, social entrepreneurs should focus more on social value creation to maximise their social impact in the communities. These findings are in line with those of Alegre, Kislenko, and Berbegal-Mirabent (2017) and Morris, Santos, and Kuratko (2021), who opined that social value creation stands as the decisive element in mobilising resources through inventive solutions capable of making a tangible impact on the underserved communities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigates the dynamic needs of social entrepreneurship in providing sustainable solutions to social problems in South West Nigeria. The findings revealed that key dimensions of social entrepreneurship (social mission, social change making and social value creation) have a significant impact on attaining sustainable community development outcomes. Notably, social value creation has the strongest and most significant impact on sustainable community development, indicating a greater improvement in providing sustainable solutions to social problems in South West Nigeria.

To enhance social entrepreneurship activities in Nigeria, the government and policymakers should put in place suitable leadership programs, initiatives and support aimed at enhancing the operational effectiveness of social enterprises. Such initiatives may include providing regulatory frameworks that promote social enterprise operation and sustainable business practices. In addition, the government can further provide tax incentives and subsidies for enterprises whose major aims are to invest in social and community-driven projects. In line with this, the government should strengthen the nations' Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) policies to promote active participation in social entrepreneurship, encourage social enterprise formation and their sustainable practices.

Social enterprises should put in place effective social entrepreneurship activities in their organisational model and should particularly focus on social mission and social value creation in order to enhance their social impact and contribute to sustainable community development. This social mission can be geared towards social value creation by addressing imperative social necessities such as healthcare, welfare, employment creation and education in areas where the efforts of governmental or private organisations may be insufficiently addressed. In line with this, social enterprises and social entrepreneurs should develop community feedback systems to continuously strengthen and improve their social change-making activities.

Lastly, social entrepreneurs should ensure that sufficient capabilities and resources are provided to enable them carry to out their activities successfully. These resources should include physical and human capital resources, which should be combined with the capability to identify opportunities and exploit them. Thus, adequate resource can provide competitive advantages and have a significant impact on providing sustainable solutions to social problems. Through resource possession, social ventures will be able to comprehend how their ideas and plans will increase their efficacy and efficiency in achieving sustainable community development.

Limitations of the Study

This research work was undertaken solely to examine the effect of social entrepreneurship on sustainable community development, with a particular focus on the social mission, social change making and social value creation components of social entrepreneurship.

Although the study implemented a screening process to ensure that only households with at least one member connected to social enterprise (as a CDA leader, a

beneficiary or someone aware of such activities) were included, there is a potential for selection bias. This method excluded households without any known social enterprise connection, which may have limited the diversity of perspectives, especially those of individuals unaware or indirectly affected by social enterprises.

In addition, data collection for the study was hindered by cultural sensitivities, which made it difficult to access some households in remote areas, potentially introducing bias. Additionally, budgetary and resource constraints limited access to certain rural populations. The study was also geographically restricted to the six states in the South-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria, thereby limiting the generalisability of the findings to other regions. Furthermore, the absence of published secondary data on the role of social enterprises in Nigeria's economic and national development restricted the ability to validate primary data and reduce potential bias.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by demonstrating the effect of social entrepreneurship in linking social mission, social change making and social value creation to sustainable community development in South West Nigeria. The research delineates the pathways of social mission, social change making and social value creation, revealing that their effects are primarily direct with no necessity for moderation and mediating variables, challenging prior assumptions by favouring direct relationships. This insight refines the understanding of the influence mechanisms involved. Lastly, the research advances SEM-PLS methodology by emphasising the importance of direct analysis results.

Suggestions for Further Studies

In view of the findings and conclusions of this research, the following areas are suggested for further research directions:

- i. Future research should investigate potential mediators and moderators that may further enhance the relationships between social entrepreneurship and sustainable community development.
- ii. Other researchers should conduct longitudinal studies to examine the temporal effects of social entrepreneurship on sustainable community development. This could reveal dynamic interactions and causal pathways that are not evident in cross-sectional analyses.
- iii. Future studies may consider a comparative analysis involving both directly and indirectly affected households to capture a broader range of insights.

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