

Insecurity as a catalyst for entrepreneurial resilience: Resourcefulness, optimism, and hardiness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the effects of insecurity on the three constitutive dimensions of entrepreneurial resilience, namely entrepreneurial resourcefulness, entrepreneurial optimism, and entrepreneurial hardiness, among family-owned businesses operating in the markets of Taraba State, Nigeria. Grounded in the Broken Window Theory and the entrepreneurial resilience literature, the study employs a correlational survey research design and criterion sampling to identify 363 family-owned businesses from a population of 6,744 eligible enterprises distributed across 107 markets in the State's 16 Local Government Areas. Data were collected via structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with bias-corrected bootstrapping of 5,000 resamples in SmartPLS 4. The measurement model demonstrates satisfactory reliability and validity, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70, composite reliability values above 0.88, Average Variance Extracted values above 0.50, and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratios within acceptable thresholds. Structural model results reveal that insecurity exerts a significant and positive effect on all three resilience dimensions: entrepreneurial resourcefulness ($\beta = 0.825$, $t = 30.910$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 2.133$), entrepreneurial optimism ($\beta = 0.797$, $t = 25.042$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 1.738$), and entrepreneurial hardiness ($\beta = 0.750$, $t = 18.192$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 1.288$). The coefficients of determination indicate that insecurity explains 68.1%, 63.5%, and 56.3% of the variance in resourcefulness, optimism, and hardiness respectively, all with strong predictive relevance ($Q^2 > 0$). All three null hypotheses were rejected. The findings establish that exposure to insecurity, far from uniformly suppressing entrepreneurial activity, can stimulate the development of adaptive capabilities, positive psychological orientation, and psychological endurance among owner-managers of family businesses. The study contributes to entrepreneurial resilience theory by demonstrating that adversity-driven resilience is empirically measurable and context-specific in conflict-affected emerging economies.

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Keywords: Entrepreneurial Resilience, Insecurity, Family-Owned Businesses, Entrepreneurial Resourcefulness, Entrepreneurial Optimism, Entrepreneurial Hardiness, PLS-SEM, Taraba State, Nigeria, Broken Window Theory

JEL Classification: L25, L26, D81

1. Introduction

Insecurity is a condition characterised by danger, threats, troubles, fear, anxiety, conflict, crises, attacks or wars. Globally, examples include the wars between Greece and Rome; World War I and II; the Rwandan genocide; the Vietnam War; the Cambodia–Laos conflict; conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe; the Syrian civil war; conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Yemen; and the Nigeria–Biafra civil war (Bari, 2023; Monteh, 2025; Pattinson & Cunningham, 2022). Other global crises include the 2008 financial crisis, terrorism and the coronavirus pandemic of 2019 (COVID-19) (Bardhan, 2022; Hwang, 2024). More recently, insecurity has been exemplified by the Russia–Ukraine war and tensions involving America, Israel and Iran. Monteh (2025) argues that the consequences of these conditions include violence, displacement and human rights abuses. The history of insecurity in Nigeria, and Africa more broadly, can be traced to the resistance of African leaders against European invaders, the structure of colonial governments, and the extent of exploitation by colonial administrators (Fanon, 1968, as cited in Wilmot, 2006; Kalama & Paul, 2020). In Nigeria, insecurity became particularly pronounced in February 2010 (Adeleke, 2018) and has since spread across the six geopolitical zones of the country: North East, North West, North Central, South South, South East and South West (Samad, 2022). The North East remains the most notable hotspot, with Taraba State among the most severely affected (Omogunloye et al., 2023). Common insecurity issues in the State include insurgency, banditry and communal conflicts. This situation has been exacerbated by the activities of Boko Haram, a jihadist terrorist group that emerged in the 2000s and intensified its operations in 2009 (Akanbi, 2023; Bello, 2022).

Insecurity discourages business development, promotes the continuous decline of micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) activities, engenders higher financial losses (Usman & Bello, 2023), discourages both domestic and foreign investment, strains enterprise financial resources (Ayobami et al., 2024) and stifles improvements in business performance (Farinola et al., 2025; Hoelsche et al., 2025; Ndubuisi-Okolo & Onuzulike, 2022). Due to their limited capacity to absorb market shocks and lack of resources to navigate volatile environments, MSMEs are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of insecurity. These effects include increased costs of doing business, reduced profitability, lack of growth and sustainability and the temporary or permanent closure of enterprises (Ayobami et al., 2024; Garba et al., 2024; Ibrahim, 2024; Ldama & Sali, 2024; Ndubuisi-Okolo & Onuzulike, 2022). Consequently, researchers advocate for the development of businesses characterised by longevity and resilience in communities plagued by insecurity (Campopiano et al., 2019; Isichei et al., 2024). Family-owned businesses often rely on resources

generated during periods of stability to adapt and survive in troubled environments (Mzid et al., 2019). Owing to their longevity, family businesses may endure and prosper even in traumatic situations that threaten their operations, particularly when entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience (Campopiano et al., 2019; Chrisman et al., 2011). Resilience is a psychological condition that enables individuals and firms to navigate change, overcome challenges and achieve set objectives (Fatoki, 2018).

Entrepreneurial resilience facilitates the ability of entrepreneurs to learn from past mistakes made during periods of discomfort and uncertainty (Hamed & Mehdiabadi, 2020), enabling them to make progress afterward (Bernard & Barbosa, 2016). It is shaped by entrepreneurial resourcefulness, entrepreneurial optimism and entrepreneurial hardiness (Fatoki, 2018; Korber & McNaughton, 2018). Insecurity in Taraba State has led to displacement, loss of lives and property, and market closures. These conditions discourage investors and entrepreneurs, hinder access to basic goods and services and worsen the State's economy (Abiodun et al., 2020; Baba, 2023). Approximately twenty percent (20%) of businesses close within five years of experiencing a crisis. Those that survive in troubled environments often do so by combining family and business resources with the assets accumulated during periods of stability (Chrisman et al., 2011; Haynes et al., 2011; Marshall et al., 2015; Mzid et al., 2019; Schrank et al., 2013). Family-owned businesses, in particular, are highly susceptible to environmental disruptions. Existing studies in Taraba State have not adequately examined businesses that continue to operate despite insecurity. What remains under-researched is the effect of insecurity on the entrepreneurial resilience of family-owned businesses that persist and thrive within the State's markets (Ancho, 2014; Sofoluwe et al., 2013; Umoh et al., 2023). These gaps form the basis of the current study, which seeks to investigate the impact of insecurity on entrepreneurial resourcefulness, entrepreneurial optimism and entrepreneurial hardiness among family-owned businesses located in Taraba State markets.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows: the next section outlines the theoretical foundation and hypothesis development. This is followed by the methods, results, test of hypothesis and discussion of key findings. Finally, the paper presents theoretical implications, practical implications and conclusions.

2. Literature Review

The Broken Window Theory (BWT) was propounded by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in 1982. The BWT holds that to stop crimes from escalating into more serious offences, they should be stopped as soon as they are committed (Gupta & Yadav, 2023; Wilson & Kelling, 2016). Any act of social disorder when unchecked can trigger increase in crime rate, insecurity, chain destruction and underdevelopment in the society (Magaji et al., 2024; Wilson & Kelling, 2016). However, if the broken window is fixed, that is, if an individual who causes a social disorder is arrested and punished, crime rate will decline, insecurity will reduce, social order will be restored and the society will be returned to the part of development (Gupta & Yadav, 2023; Magaji et al.,

2024). The individuals behind the kidnapping, banditry and killings in Nigeria and Taraba State in particular take advantage of the weak mechanism for the control of social disorder to perpetrate their nefarious activities. The BWT has been criticised on the ground that it creates a causal link between disorder and crime, and causes racial/class bias and resource misallocation by governments; a practice that has left some sections of the society without some basic amenities and live below the poverty line. Despite the criticisms, the BWT still offers itself as a practice for reducing infractions and maintaining social order (Alsafty, 2023; Magaji et al., 2024; Pandey & Pathak, 2021).

2.1 Entrepreneurial Resilience

The term *resilience* originates from the Latin word *resilire*, meaning “to leap back” or “to jump back” (Hosseini et al., 2021; Mitchell, 2013; Nchabeleng et al., 2018). Initially, resilience was a concept in material physics (Bernard & Barbosa, 2016; Salvato et al., 2020; Tonis, 2015) before being adopted in fields such as engineering, ecology, psychology, sociology, disaster management and business administration in the 1950s. More recently, researchers have applied it to entrepreneurship studies (Bonanno, 2012; Korber & McNaughton, 2018; Linnenluecke, 2017; Michaelis et al., 2020). This makes resilience a concept with applications across multiple fields of knowledge (Miles et al., 2016; Pérez-López et al., 2016; Prayag et al., 2018). Resilience can take different forms at the individual, group, organisational, societal and disciplinary levels (Antonescu, 2020; Edwinah & Eshegheri, 2017; Madni & Jackson, 2009). Kotsios (2023) emphasises that personal characteristics and values such as reliability, integrity and work ethic are crucial in building resilience to address environmental challenges (Duchek, 2018; King et al., 2016). In entrepreneurship, the resilience of an enterprise is closely tied to the resilience of the entrepreneur. Within a family context, the entrepreneurial resilience of an enterprising family can reinforce both the personal resilience of the entrepreneur and the resilience of the enterprise itself (Bhamra et al., 2011). Entrepreneurial resilience can be understood as a set of dynamic adaptive mechanisms that enable entrepreneurs to keep moving forward despite unfavorable economic conditions and market disruptions (Bernard & Barbosa, 2016). Adisatya et al. (2022) add that entrepreneurial resilience is the ability to persevere and recover quickly after overcoming adversity. Entrepreneurial resilience fosters a positive mindset, which enhances entrepreneurs’ ability to manage difficult personal circumstances, uncertain market conditions, volatile environmental factors and the dynamic entrepreneurial environment (Adisatya et al., 2022). Further, in relation to business performance, entrepreneurial resilience enables entrepreneurs to withstand both internal and external challenges (Chowdhury et al., 2018; Elenwo & Onuoha, 2023). It can be assessed through dimensions such as entrepreneurial resourcefulness, entrepreneurial optimism and entrepreneurial hardiness (Torres et al., 2019).

2.2 Entrepreneurial Resourcefulness

Resourcefulness refers to the skills, capacities and resources entrepreneurs possess and employ to navigate challenging situations (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012). Fatoki (2018) argues that resourcefulness encompasses talents, capabilities and assets that can be mobilised to overcome environmental challenges. As a behaviour, resourcefulness embodies the principle of “doing more with less” and finding innovative ways to obtain, organise, or utilise resources (Moss et al., 2022, p. 8). In the entrepreneurial domain, Misra and Kumar (2000, p. 144) define resourcefulness as “the ability to identify opportunities in the environment and regulate and direct behaviour to successfully cope with the task of creating and managing an organisation to pursue the opportunity.” Similarly, Williams et al. (2021, p. 2) describe entrepreneurial resourcefulness as a “boundary-breaking behaviour of creatively bringing resources to bear and deploying them to generate and capture new or unexpected sources of value in the process of entrepreneurship.” In essence, entrepreneurial resourcefulness is the capacity to utilise available resources effectively in managing environmental challenges. Resourcefulness fosters creative thinking, idea generation, goal achievement, opportunity recognition and problem-solving ability. It can transform individuals into entrepreneurs (Akeke et al., 2018; Bradley, 2015). Families, too, can deploy resources to create or capture value (An et al., 2018; Li et al., 2018; Michaelis et al., 2021). Ultimately, resourcefulness facilitates dynamic responses to environmental challenges by both individuals and families (Bradley, 2015; Williams et al., 2021).

2.3 Entrepreneurial Optimism

The concept, *optimism* was derived from the Latin word *optimus*, meaning “best.” This suggests that optimistic individuals consistently believe, hope, expect, and anticipate the best possible outcomes from any situation, condition, or event (Bhowmik & Sahai, 2018). Optimism is rooted in the self-regulation model, which posits that people continually exert effort to overcome obstacles in pursuit of favorable goals (Scheier et al., 1992; Wrosch & Scheier, 2003). It is inherently future-oriented, requiring individuals to look ahead without allowing unpleasant past experiences to overshadow future expectations (Bartz & Bartz, 2018). In entrepreneurship, optimism reflects an entrepreneur’s ability to maintain a positive attitude amid challenging circumstances (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012). Entrepreneurial optimism is the capacity to draw on past experiences and believe that actions taken in difficult or seemingly hopeless environments will ultimately yield positive outcomes. Entrepreneurial optimism encourages learning from past mistakes and failures, as well as the identification and exploitation of opportunities (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012; Anglin et al., 2016; Bhowmik & Sahai, 2018; Chen et al., 2013; Elenwo & Onuoha, 2023; Hmieleski & Baron, 2009). It facilitates new product development, the launch of new ventures and entrepreneurial activity in risky, uncertain and high-failure environments (Anglin et al., 2016; Dushnitsky, 2010). Optimism promotes persistence in the face of environmental challenges, fosters positive moods (Shaheen, 2015), enhances emotional resilience

(Madar et al., 2019) and strengthens commitment to business ventures, outlook and pursuits (Iringe-koko & Onuoha, 2023). Moreover, entrepreneurial optimism influences curiosity (Jeraj, 2014), entrepreneurial endeavours (Dawson & Henley, 2012), business performance (Chen et al., 2020; Kim & Park, 2019; Li et al., 2021; Tenney et al., 2015) and overall quality of life for entrepreneurs (Bhowmik & Sahai, 2018). It helps entrepreneurs disregard negative information that could otherwise increase the likelihood of failure (Anglin et al., 2016; Hmieleski & Baron, 2009).

2.4 Entrepreneurial hardiness

Originally, hardiness was viewed as an inborn trait. However, recent research shows that it can be learned and developed as individuals gain life experience (Soni, 2021). Entrepreneurial hardiness stems from the broader concept of psychological hardiness. It refers to an entrepreneur's ability to exercise personal control over their business without external assistance (Bull, 2025; Kobasa, 1979; Maddi, 2002). Entrepreneurial hardiness is defined as the capacity to manage stress and remain committed to entrepreneurial activities despite challenges in both the entrepreneurial and environmental context. Hardiness regulates entrepreneurs' behaviour and responses in dynamic environments, empowering them to stay engaged and committed to their goals despite stressors (Spiridon, 2022). It fosters a strong sense of life and work commitment, a feeling of control, openness to change and resilience in the face of challenges (Bartone et al., 2009). It reduces the impact of negativity on well-being and enables entrepreneurs to identify positive aspects within adverse situations (Abdollahi et al., 2018). Hardiness also serves as a resistance resource in stressful circumstances (Kobasa, 1979; Nordmo et al., 2025), allowing entrepreneurs to function more effectively in their ventures (Pengilly & Dowd, 2000).

2.5 Insecurity

Insecurity represents anxiety about one's worth, abilities, skills and value, often linked to perceptions of risk or danger (Adeleke, 2018). It connotes hazard, uncertainty, lack of protection and absence of safety (Isaac et al., 2019). Davis et al. (2022) describe insecurity as a state of uncertainty, lack of confidence, absence of peace and order, and fear for the safety of lives and property. Adeleke further notes that insecurity can have physical, mental and emotional impacts. Insecurity is defined as a condition characterised by danger, threats, crises, clashes, fear, anxiety, attacks and/or loss of lives and property. It contributes to unemployment, armed robbery, street begging and poverty (Musa et al., 2023). Insecurity also leads to a decline in entrepreneurial activity (Ayobami et al., 2024), reduced business performance, and the relocation or closure of enterprises (Nwagboso, 2012).

2.6 Family-owned business

Family-owned businesses are firms that meet the following criteria: (i) the majority of decision-making rights are held by the natural person(s) who established the firm, by those who

have acquired its share capital, or by their spouses, parents, children, or direct heirs; (ii) these decision-making rights may be exercised directly or indirectly; (iii) at least one representative of the family or kin is formally involved in the governance of the firm; and (iv) a listed company qualifies as a family enterprise if the founder, acquirer of the share capital, or their family members or descendants hold at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the decision-making rights associated with the share capital (Agbim, 2019; Okafor et al., 2018).

2.7 Hypothesis Development

2.7.1 *Insecurity and entrepreneurial resourcefulness*

Crises can threaten the viability and survival of entrepreneurial ventures. Enterprises endure disruptive periods by demonstrating resourcefulness (Batjargal et al., 2023; Kuckertz & Brändle, 2022; Scheidgen et al., 2025). Insecurity negatively affects entrepreneurs' skills (Adeleke, 2018), the rate of new venture creation, and the growth and success of businesses (Ekoja et al., 2022). It also undermines firms' innovative work behaviour (Athifah et al., 2024). During crises, entrepreneurs and their ventures rely on resourcefulness for support (Bjorklund et al., 2020; Kuckertz et al., 2020; Scheidgen et al., 2025; Sonenshein & Nault, 2024). For families facing financial difficulties, resourcefulness serves as a buffer against the negative consequences of financial crises (Li et al., 2018). Thus, we propose that:

H1: Insecurity has no significant effect on entrepreneurial resourcefulness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State

2.7.2 *Insecurity and entrepreneurial optimism*

Entrepreneurs who experience business failure often face emotional crises. They regain optimism when they begin to nurture re-entry intentions. At this stage, such entrepreneurs require the ability to regulate their emotions, remain cool-headed in their thinking, cultivate public self-consciousness and strengthen their optimism about operating a new enterprise (Wijaya & Layman, 2023). This suggests that insecurity is linked to self-control and hope (Wen et al., 2022), performance optimism (Godollei & Beck, 2023), feeling of inferiority (Bansal & Cherian, 2024) and optimism more broadly (Sharma & Sharma, 2024). Hence, we hypothesise that:

H2: Insecurity has no significant effect on entrepreneurial optimism among family-owned businesses in Taraba State

2.7.3 *Insecurity and entrepreneurial hardiness*

The unpredictability and uncertainty of today's world are key factors contributing to the fear of crises (Zinchenko, 2007). The capacity to withstand the stress associated with this fear - without losing internal balance or experiencing failure in life's activities - represents hardiness (Andronnikova, 2021; Liu et al., 2020; Moffett et al., 2021). Hardiness is an essential resource for confronting future uncertainties (Zeer et al., 2016) and enables individuals to cope with age-related

challenges (Andronnikova, 2021). Entrepreneurial resilience serves both as a survival mechanism and as a driver of competitiveness and growth in turbulent entrepreneurial environments (Hwang, 2024). Therefore, we hypothesise that:

H3: Insecurity has no significant effect on entrepreneurial hardiness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State

3. Methodology

A correlational survey research design was adopted for this study. The population comprised 20,569 registered traders distributed across 107 markets in the 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Taraba State. Using criterion sampling technique, family-owned businesses were selected based on the following conditions: (i) the trader was still actively engaged in business activities within the market; (ii) the trader had commenced business activities before the onset of insecurity issues; (iii) the trader did not completely relocate from the market during the peak of insecurity; (iv) the trader lost some wares during the attacks and crises that ushered in the insecurity.; and (v) one or more members of the trader's family worked in the stall. Based on these criteria, the number of family-owned businesses in the markets was determined to be 6,744.

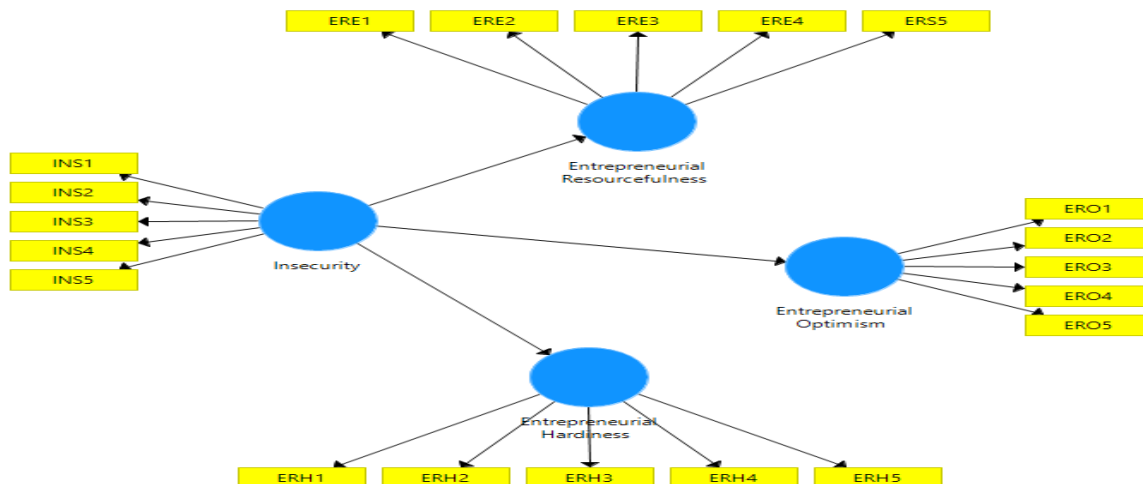
To avoid the difficulties and high costs associated with studying the entire population, a representative sample size was drawn from the 6,744 family-owned businesses. The sample size of 363 was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for finite populations. Proportionate stratified random sampling was then employed to allocate representative proportions of the sample size across the LGAs and market strata. The proportional allocation was computed using Bowley's (1937) formula. Data for the study were collected through questionnaire. The choice of questionnaire as the instrument was based on its suitability for capturing a wide range of questions directly related to the research objectives.

3.1 Measures

Insecurity as a construct was measured using six items: "I always worry about the persistent tribal crisis in the State," "The frequent clashes between farmers and herders have made me continue to live in fear," "Due to the rising cases of kidnapping in the State, the rate of loss of lives and properties is increasing," "Attacks on households at night by bandits have made sleeping at home dangerous," "The threats and attacks on markets by bandits have led to the destruction of lives and goods, leaving these places almost desolate," and "Religious troubles and attacks on places of worship have left some parts of the State deserted." Entrepreneurial resourcefulness was measured using six items: "I am able to adapt when changes occur," "past successes give me confidence in dealing with new challenges and difficulties," "during times of stress or crisis, I know where to turn for help," "I have at least one close and secure relationship that helps me when I am stressed," "I sometimes seek the help of friends when dealing with challenging issues," and "When there are no clear human solutions to my problems, I depend on God for help."

Entrepreneurial optimism was measured using six items: “even when things look hopeless, I do not easily give up,” “when I am faced with problems and under pressure, I see things from the humorous side and stay focused,” “I like to take the lead in solving problems rather than letting others make all the decisions,” “I give my best effort no matter what the outcome may be,” “In dealing with life’s problems, I sometimes follow my inner knowing,” and “I tend to bounce back after illness, injury, or hardships.” Entrepreneurial Hardiness was measured using six items: “no matter the challenges, I believe I can achieve my goals,” “I can handle whatever comes my way,” “my ability to cope with stress makes me stronger,” “I have the ability to handle unpleasant or painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger,” “when I make difficult decisions, I am not easily discouraged by failure,” and “I see myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges and difficulties.” All variables in the questionnaire were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Data collection was facilitated by four research assistants, each responsible for four LGAs. The questionnaire was independently subjected to content and construct validity checks by two lecturers in the Department of Entrepreneurial Studies, Veritas University, Abuja, and a trader operating a family-owned business. Corrections were incorporated based on their feedback. The analysis was performed with the aid of SmartPLS (version 4.1.1.6). The model of the study is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Model of the study



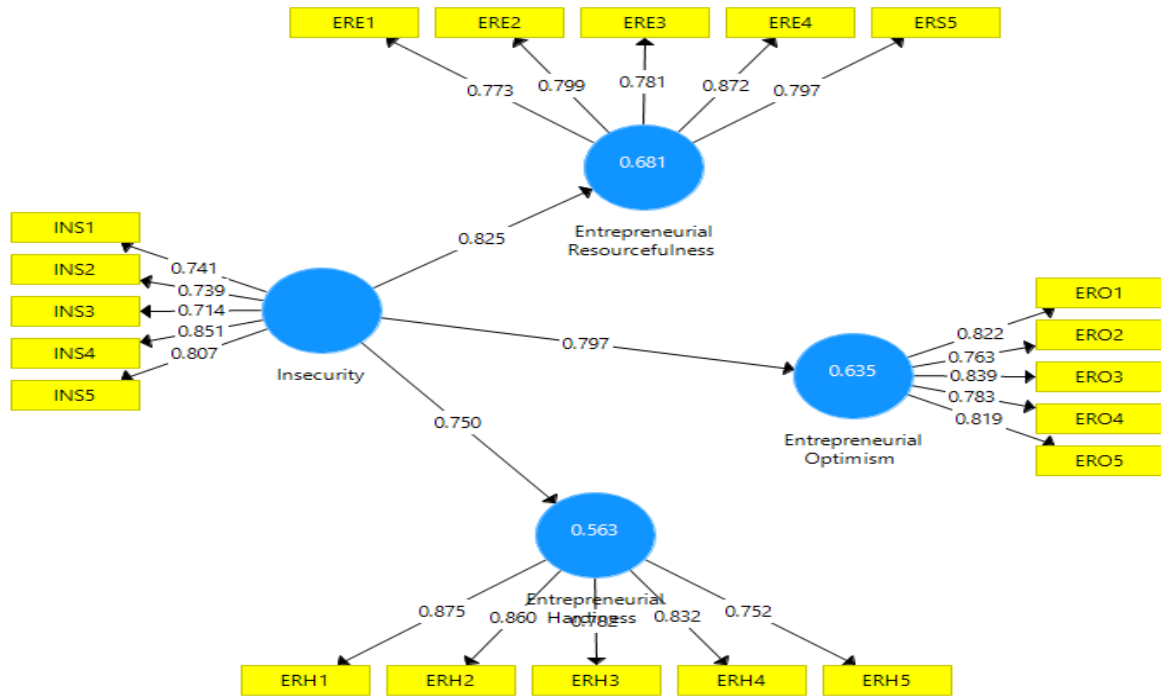
Out of the 363 copies questionnaire that were administered, 361 were retrieved and properly completed. The preliminary data assessment shows the absence of missing data and outliers.

3.2 The Measurement Model

An assessment of the outer loadings of the variables in the study, as shown in Figure 2, indicates the strength of the relationships among the constructs. As suggested by Hair et al. (2019), loadings that exceed 0.70 indicate that the constructs contribute significantly to the variance in the

indicators. This implies that over 50% of the variance in each indicator is explained by its respective construct, thereby enhancing confidence in the accuracy and validity of the measurement model.

Figure 2. Outer loading



The reliability of the study scale is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability of the Study Scale

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Entrepreneurial Hardiness	0.879	0.890	0.912	0.675
Entrepreneurial Optimism	0.865	0.865	0.902	0.649
Entrepreneurial Resourcefulness	0.864	0.867	0.902	0.649
Insecurity	0.830	0.843	0.880	0.596

Source: Smart PLS Output 2026

Internal consistency, as shown in Table 1, was assessed using composite reliability measures. Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the minimum criterion of 0.70. Convergent validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with all variables showing values higher than 0.50. This indicates that the constructs account for at least 50% of the variance in the study items, thereby demonstrating satisfactory convergent validity. As recommended by Hair et al. (2017), these results confirm strong consistency and reliability among the constructs. The discriminant validity of the constructs was performed using Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio and presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

	Entrepreneurial Hardiness	Entrepreneurial Optimism	Entrepreneurial Resourcefulness	Insecurity
Entrepreneurial Hardiness				
Entrepreneurial Optimism	0.790			
Entrepreneurial Resourcefulness	0.884	0.703		
Insecurity	0.860	0.851	0.796	

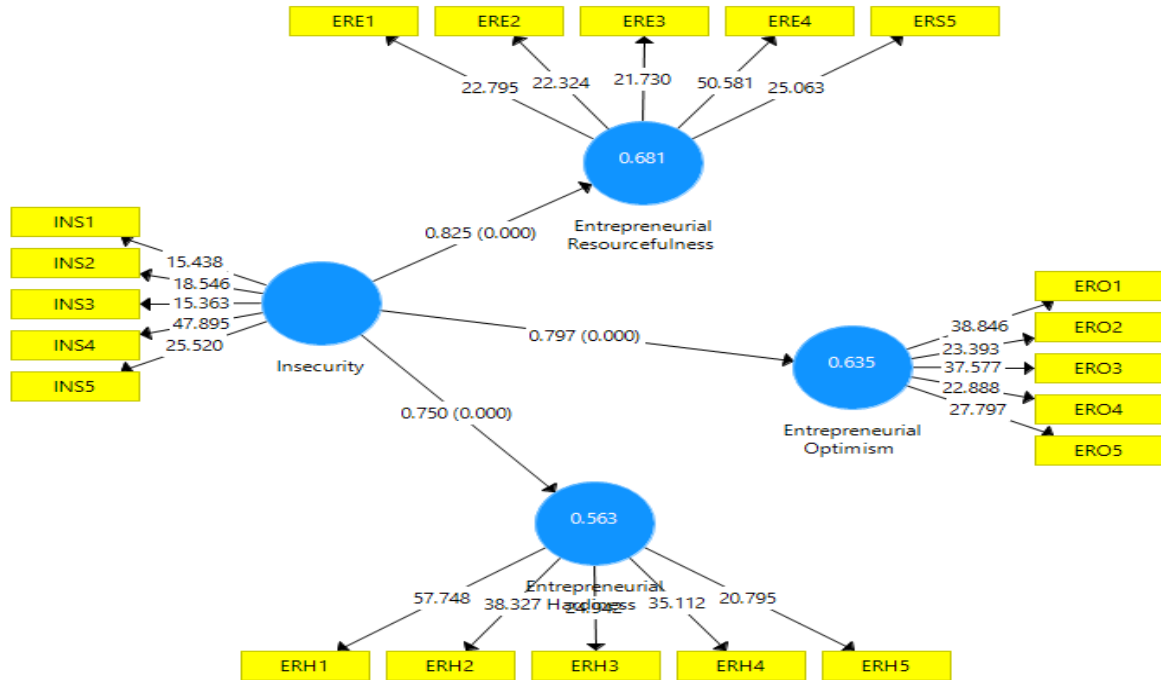
Source: Smart PLS Output 2026

The HTMT values among the constructs range from 0.703 to 0.884, indicating that all constructs are sufficiently distinct from one another. Specifically, the HTMT value between entrepreneurial hardiness and entrepreneurial optimism is 0.790; between entrepreneurial hardiness and entrepreneurial resourcefulness, 0.884; and between entrepreneurial hardiness and insecurity, 0.860. Similarly, the HTMT values between entrepreneurial optimism and entrepreneurial resourcefulness (0.703), entrepreneurial optimism and insecurity (0.851), and entrepreneurial resourcefulness and insecurity (0.796) all fall below the recommended threshold. These results indicate that discriminant validity is established, confirming that each construct measures a concept that is empirically distinct from the others in the model.

3.3 The Structural Model

In assessing the structural model, standard evaluation criteria were considered, including path coefficients, t-values, p-values, and the coefficient of determination (R^2). The bootstrapping procedure was conducted using 5,000 resamples.

Figure 3. Path coefficient of the regression model



The path coefficients, t-values and p-values for the relationships among the constructs in the study are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Path Coefficients

	Path Coefficients**(Beta)	T - values	P- Values	Decision	F ²
Insecurity -> EHS	0.750	18.192	0.000	Not accepted	1.288
Insecurity -> EOM	0.797	25.042	0.000	Not accepted	1.738
Insecurity -> ERS	0.825	30.910	0.000	Not accepted	2.133

Note: Entrepreneurial hardiness = EHS, Entrepreneurial optimism = EOM, Entrepreneurial resourcefulness = ERS

Source: Smart PLS Output 2026

3.4 Test of Hypotheses

H1: Insecurity has no significant effect on entrepreneurial resourcefulness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State.

Table 3 depict that insecurity has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial resourcefulness with a path coefficient (β) of 0.825, t-value of 30.910, and p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that insecurity significantly influences the ability of family-owned businesses to become resourceful in adapting to difficult conditions. The f^2 value of 2.133 reveals a very strong effect size of insecurity on entrepreneurial resourcefulness. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and the t-value is higher than the critical value of 1.96, hypothesis one is not accepted, implying that insecurity significantly affects entrepreneurial resourcefulness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State.

H2: Insecurity has no significant effect on entrepreneurial optimism among family-owned businesses in Taraba State.

The findings reveal that insecurity significantly influences entrepreneurial optimism with a path coefficient (β) of 0.797, t-value of 25.042, and p-value of 0.000 (Table 3). This suggests that insecurity conditions significantly shape the level of optimism entrepreneurs exhibit while managing their businesses under challenging environments. The effect size (f^2) of 1.738 indicates a strong magnitude of influence of insecurity on entrepreneurial optimism. Because the p-value is less than 0.05 and the t-value is greater than 1.96, the null hypothesis is not accepted, confirming that insecurity has a statistically significant effect on entrepreneurial optimism among family-owned businesses in Taraba State.

H3: Insecurity has no significant effect on entrepreneurial hardiness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State.

The results further indicate that insecurity has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial hardiness, with a path coefficient (β) of 0.750, t-value of 18.192, and p-value of 0.000 (Table 3). This implies that insecurity significantly strengthens the resilience and psychological endurance (hardiness) of entrepreneurs operating family-owned businesses in Taraba State. The effect size (f^2) of 1.288 also shows a substantial impact of insecurity on entrepreneurial hardiness. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 threshold and the t-value exceed 1.96, the null hypothesis is not accepted, indicating that insecurity significantly affects entrepreneurial hardiness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State. The coefficient of determination (R^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) of the endogenous constructs in the model are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination and Predictive Relevance

	R^2	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
Entrepreneurial Hardiness	0.563	0.372
Entrepreneurial Optimism	0.635	0.407

Entrepreneurial Resourcefulness	0.681	0.436
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Source: Smart PLS Output 2026

The R^2 values in Table 4 represent the extent to which the independent construct (insecurity) explains the variance in the dependent variables. The first R^2 value of 0.563 indicates that 56.3% of the variation in entrepreneurial hardiness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State is explained by insecurity, while the remaining 43.7% is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The second R^2 value of 0.635 indicates that 63.5% of the variation in entrepreneurial optimism is explained by insecurity. The third and highest R^2 value of 0.681 shows that insecurity accounts for 68.1% of the variance in entrepreneurial resourcefulness. Further, the Q^2 values for entrepreneurial hardiness (0.372), entrepreneurial optimism (0.407), and entrepreneurial resourcefulness (0.436) are all greater than zero. This suggests that the model has strong predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs. Thus, the explanatory power and predictive capability of insecurity on the dimensions of entrepreneurial resilience among family-owned businesses in Taraba State are substantial.

4. Discussion of Findings

First, the results show that the effect of insecurity on entrepreneurial resourcefulness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State is significant and positive. This implies that entrepreneurs operating in environments characterised by insecurity tend to develop stronger adaptive abilities and creative problem-solving skills in order to sustain their businesses. This finding is consistent with prior studies, which suggest that crises and unstable business environments often compel entrepreneurs to become more resourceful in order to maintain business operations and survive turbulent conditions (Batjargal et al., 2023; Kuckertz & Brändle, 2022; Scheidgen et al., 2025). Entrepreneurs rely on their ability to mobilise scarce resources and provide solutions to environmental challenges (Bjorklund et al., 2020; Sonenshein & Nault, 2024). However, some researchers (e.g., Adeleke, 2018; Ekoja et al., 2022) have argued that insecurity can weaken entrepreneurial capabilities and hinder business growth. Therefore, the current study empirically demonstrates that entrepreneurs can develop, strengthen and deploy resourcefulness as a coping and survival strategy in a turbulent business environment.

Second, the results of the study show that insecurity is significantly related to entrepreneurial optimism among family-owned businesses in Taraba State. This finding indicates that entrepreneurs can develop optimism as a psychological mechanism that enables them to remain hopeful about the future of their ventures, even in the face of insecurity. The result aligns with findings in the extant literature, which assert that entrepreneurs who experience severe adversity often cultivate optimism to sustain existing businesses or restart their ventures (Wijaya & Layman, 2023). The study is also consistent with the research of Godollei and Beck (2023) and Wen et al. (2022), who conclude that challenging business environments can enhance the hope and optimism

of entrepreneurs. Similarly, Sharma and Sharma (2024) affirm that entrepreneurs tend to maintain optimism in challenging business environments. Despite the negative emotional consequences of insecurity, such as feelings of inferiority and psychological distress (Bansal & Cherian, 2024), the present study demonstrates that entrepreneurs can still strengthen their optimism and remain actively engaged in their businesses amid insecurity.

Third, the study reveals that the effect of insecurity on entrepreneurial hardiness among family-owned businesses in Taraba State is significant. This implies that exposure to insecurity can strengthen the psychological resilience, endurance and commitment of entrepreneurs to their businesses in the face of uncertainty. This finding aligns with existing studies, which establish that hardiness helps entrepreneurs maintain internal balance during crises (Andronnikova, 2021; Liu et al., 2020; Moffett et al., 2021). The present result is also consistent with the conclusion of Zeer et al. (2016), who found that hardiness mentally empowers individuals to confront the future despite uncertainties. Therefore, the current study demonstrates that entrepreneurs operating in insecure environments such as Taraba State may develop stronger psychological toughness, enabling them to endure business disruptions and promote the growth of their ventures.

The study makes a significant theoretical contribution to the literature on entrepreneurial resilience and family business by establishing that insecurity, often in the form of crises and challenges, can trigger the development of entrepreneurial resourcefulness, entrepreneurial optimism and entrepreneurial hardiness among owner-managers of family businesses. It thus emphasises that challenging business environments can encourage entrepreneurs to build adaptive capabilities, cultivate a positive psychological orientation, and develop mental toughness.

The managerial implications of the study suggest that entrepreneurs operating in environments characterised by insecurity can seize the opportunity to develop more effective coping and adaptive strategies. In terms of entrepreneurial resourcefulness, owner-managers should enhance their problem-solving skills, embrace innovation, and utilise resources more efficiently. With respect to entrepreneurial optimism, entrepreneurs should maintain a positive outlook toward their business prospects. Regarding entrepreneurial hardiness, business owners should strengthen their psychological endurance and commitment to overcoming environmental challenges.

The implications for policymakers include the need to implement appropriate laws and measures that support the development of entrepreneurial resilience in insecure business environments. Policymakers should also facilitate access to programs that promote mentorship and networking, with a focus on equipping entrepreneurs with the skills and strategies needed to cope with and thrive in turbulent conditions.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that, despite the serious threats posed by insecurity to family-owned businesses, it also stimulates the development of entrepreneurial resourcefulness, entrepreneurial

optimism and entrepreneurial hardiness among owner-managers of family businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. These capabilities serve as critical resilience mechanisms that enable family-owned businesses to cope with environmental turbulence and sustain their entrepreneurial activities. Strengthening these capabilities will further enhance the survivability and performance of family-owned businesses in the State. Accordingly, the study offers several recommendations. First, relevant government and non-governmental agencies should, through training and retraining programs, encourage owner-managers of family-owned businesses to develop and strengthen their innovativeness, ability to improvise and efficient use of limited resources. Entrepreneurs should also be exposed to crisis management and resource optimisation skills to help them remain focused in the face of insecurity-related disruptions.

Second, capacity-building initiatives that foster mentorship, networking and motivational skills among entrepreneurs should be promoted. In addition, programs designed to instill self-efficacy, a positive outlook, and long-term commitment should be developed or strengthened to enhance the survivability and performance of entrepreneurial ventures in the face of environmental challenges. Third, policymakers should be committed to implementing interventions that enhance entrepreneurs' psychological strength, stress management abilities, and coping strategies. This is essential to ensure that owner-managers remain persistent and resilient in challenging business environments. Overall, the study advocates for replication in other contexts to validate and extend the findings.

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