

UNCOVERING CO-OPERATORS ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAITS: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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Received June 2020; accepted August 2020

Abstract

In light of studying the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Morocco, this paper aims at providing a summary regarding a range of characteristics and entrepreneurial traits among cooperatives' members (co-operators). It is also about interpreting the faculty of existing literature to examine motives and antecedents leading to the development and the maintenance of entrepreneurial spirit among co-operators. The methodology followed is based on Geert Hofstede's (1980, 1994) empirical framework regarding national cultures as well as the research of both Bachelet et al (2005), and Shepherd & Douglas (1997) as regards to the impact of psychological and socio-cultural factors on entrepreneurs' personality and spirit. Cooperatives business is in an area of growing significance in Morocco. Nowadays we count more than 27000 cooperatives (15000 in 2015) where the regions of south have the major concentration of cooperatives (35%). The main source of data was collected through regional co-operators quantitative survey conducted among a group of 15 southern cooperatives in various sectors involving 114 co-operators. Investigated topics and chosen variables were decided beforehand, through a national expert's survey, and conducting interviews with 24 national experts in fields related to cooperative entrepreneurship. This is in order to having their perspectives on relevant co-operators framework settings, motivations, skills, personal traits, etc. Based on the respondents' answers, we've tried to understand the type of organizational culture within their specific entities. The results emphasized the preeminence of collective culture, a low aversion to risk and synchronous behavior towards time as well as the positive impact of entrepreneurial self-efficacy motivations such as working within a team and seizing opportunities. Outcomes underline the importance of social environment on the entrepreneurial expression concerning co-operants, as well as significant attitudes variables such as autonomy, initiative and need for fulfillment. The study recommends that co-operators should identify their unique behavior, explore ways to improve and get additional skills that will help them become more proactive towards issues of their domain. Overall, this paper provides one of a few projections of entrepreneurship assumptions on cooperatives field in Morocco and offered one glimpse into nature of cooperative members in the country. We expect this may help researchers, practitioners and policy-makers understand possible improvement opportunities for cooperative field and social entrepreneurship in general.

Research paper

Keywords: Psychological; Socio-cultural, Traits; Entrepreneurial spirit; Organizational culture

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: El Khaddar, H., Bakkar, M., El Mesquine, L., & Chakir, A. (2020). Uncovering Co-Operators Entrepreneurial Traits: An Empirical Investigation, *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Business and Economics*, 8(2), 1–35.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a vast field which incorporates simultaneously economic, social and environmental dimensions, the phenomena can take several forms which vary depending on implemented mode of organization. In general undertaking business is a serious personal challenge, the choice of an entrepreneurial career involves the contribution of several external factors and mostly different features and attitudes. In Morocco, social business entities are increasingly recognized, at a local level, as major actors in sustainable development. The particularity of these forms of organizations is that they are regarded as collective enterprises created and managed by a crowd (Social Group). The members of the social group are viewed simultaneously as employers (self-employed) and at the same time as entrepreneurs. This emphasizes the supreme importance of studying social entrepreneurs in business model of social enterprises in general and particularly cooperatives, in order to understand the motivational characteristics spurring people to become social entrepreneurs. Given the nature of the contextual particularity as to the relationship involving co-operators (owners), understanding their background's features is a serious defy.

Several approaches helped explaining the entrepreneurial phenomenon, particularly through the study of anterior factors behind the act of doing business (Ajzen, 1980; Fillion et Bourion 2008; Hernandez, 2006; Boutilier et Uzunidis, 1999; d'Adler, 1994; Fillion, Ramangalahy et al., 2003; Kruger, 2007; Beng & Muthuveloo, 2019; Omar et al., 2020). The study of the influence of cultural aspects on the organizations and personality traits,

is a topic of which we have very few studies in Morocco. Researches on the field of cooperatives are mainly oriented towards the study of specific topics such as marketing strategies of cooperatives, legal framework or leaning towards the study of precise categories of cooperatives, mainly agricultural. In line with these facts, the attempt in this paper is mainly made to provide a baseline understanding of the statue of core entrepreneurial traits and motivations among southern Moroccan co-operants. This has led to analyse the most important factors that have contributed to create and shape the current co-operants characteristics.

In this study we built on the model of Bachelet et al (2005), and Shepherd and Douglas (1997) investigating the role of psychological and socio-cultural features in the process of shaping the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals. We tried to extend these models by suggesting a detailed assessment about cooperator's spirit, thus their entrepreneurial traits using Geert Hofstede's (1980) model of organizational culture. Our empirical analysis relies on a unique data set which combines an experimental conjoint data survey obtained from one single association of a group of 15 cooperatives of various sectors all over the region of Guelmim Oued-Noun region (south of Morocco), involving a total of 114 individuals or co-operators. The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. It begins with showing the importance of the paper, followed by explaining the purpose of study. The next point will also clarify the value of this study. Section four will be about introducing an overview on the research theoretical foundation. Section five provides a brief overview of the research method-

ology followed in this study. In section six, the focus is on presenting a background of the main funding while section seven discusses Moroccan's co-operants traits, exploring in details, the statue of their motivations and organizational culture. Section nine provides a conclusion drawn from this study. The final section suggests policy implications and guidelines for practitioners, policy-makers and recommendations for further research.

The Importance of Study

Evidently, no one can deny the importance of social field on the Moroccan eco-system and the rule it has on the economic growth. This paper can reasonably provide one of the fewest co-operants researches in Morocco, and argue that several different weaknesses and limitations need to be resolved. Our study is part of larger research and recognizes the need of good and healthy economic environments to stimulate social entrepreneurial activities in Morocco. This paper is hoped to be a source and reference aid and to serve as a stimulus for a further empirical effort in this crucial field of research. It is hoped to build on our data collection and analysis and to help us building our own capacity for further oriented survey work and data analysis, as well as to support the work of the broader Moroccan academic community.

The Purpose of Study

There is a lack of statistics on the development of the social sector in Morocco in comparison with the more identified need for private sector development as source of growth and job creation. The little data based understanding of the country's social sector and how to promote entrepreneurial activity therein is among our inducements for this research. In this sense, this study has two main objectives: at first it aims to fill the theoretical void that characterizes this topic in the Moroccan context by providing a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial traits among co-operators. For that, it presents partial evidence based research on the co-operants motivations, skills and cultural orientations which can help identify framework conditions needed for its development to enhance social entrepreneurial activities. Second, it seeks to discover this specific category of entrepreneurs (social entrepreneurs) in order to initiate further extensive investigations in the future.

Value

In general, little is known about the capacity for social entrepreneurship in Morocco. This is due to the considerable lack of empirical studies in the field of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general (Jaim and Islam, 2018; Radovic Markovic & Salamzadeh, 2012). Our paper intends to contribute to narrowing the existent gap and help understanding of entrepreneurship research in the Moroccan context. The analysis in this paper can contribute to entrepreneurship research by illustrating co-operants

perceptions. Overall, this paper provides first-hand knowledge on the insufficient studies in the Moroccan social entrepreneurship environment (Salamzadeh, 2020). This can be definitely gone in line with Corley and Gioia, (2011) statement, about participating in the process of providing knowledge which is deemed to the ability to provide utile and useful insights into a phenomenon.

Theoretical foundations

The first theoretical arguments about the role and influence of cultural variables on entrepreneurship field goes back to the work of J. Schumpeter (1934). Other empirical studies, not to mention them all, can be suggested, such as the work of K.S Cameron and R.E Quinn on corporate culture (2006) and G. Hofstede's long term study about national culture, from which several conclusions are gained. It is most likely that our tradition, values, believes, representations and customs are a direct and indirect source of influence. In order to investigate these facts, we seek out for cultural and psychological explanations that may be behind organizational culture and management aspects. This led us to ask the following question: What identifies the features of co-operators entrepreneurial spirit? Yet in this article we will try to uncover the hidden face and the opacity behind co-operators spirit.

Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Spirit

There are several definitions of the concept of entrepreneurial spirit. Thus the majority refers to a set of positive attitudes to business creation. Yet it is quite important to make a distinction between entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurship, since these two notions seem to be subject of numerous confusions. According to Harper (1983), entrepreneurship is the quality that allows individuals to start a new business or to develop a dynamic and innovative firm. Still for Léger-Jarniou, (2000), entrepreneurial spirit can be defined as "the ability of an individual, a social group, a community to take risks (to invest) in a sort of adventure consisting in bringing something new, combining, in the most efficient way possible, different resources. And the logical outcome is that entrepreneurship supports the creation of companies"¹. As for Nadia Rajhi (2011), there are two visions of entrepreneurship, whereas the English definition oriented towards Result and Action is considering Entrepreneurship as the creation of organizations (Yadollahi Farsi et al., 2012). The French vision fairly broad to correspond to the concept of entrepreneurial spirit and isn't limited only to the economic vocation of venture creation (Salamzadeh et al., 2013, 2014, 2017). It rather seeks to highlight the importance of entrepreneurship (entrepreneurial culture).

¹Translated from Fortin, P. (2004) La culture entrepreneuriale, un antidote de la pauvreté, Rencontre destinée aux leaders et décideurs de la République islamique de Mauritanie.

Entrepreneurial spirit: Definitions

Albert and Marion define “enterprising spirit” as “a process which consists, for business as well as for all human activities, in identifying opportunities, gathering various resources, in order to create assets that meet a solvable demand”². Through a reading, although not exhaustive, regarding some researches in entrepreneurship, it is found that the attempts of existing definitions of entrepreneurial spirit are far from reaching consensus. We have chosen 3 key elements of entrepreneurial spirit reproduced in the table below:

Table 1. Elements of entrepreneurial spirit³

Authors	Elements of entrepreneurial spirit definition
Jean Jacques Dijoux 2013	Enhance initiative, responsibility, and faculty of business creation...
Moreau. R 2004	Risk taking, initiative, engagement and commitment...
Group of EU experts in entrepreneurship and innovation (2005)	The spirit of entrepreneurship should not be limited to venture creation. It must be seen as a general attitude that can be adopted by everyone every day and in all professional activities...
Léger-Jarniou, (2000)	Take risks (to invest), bringing something new (innovation), combining different resources....

Cooperative: Definition, Values and Principals

There are numerous and various definitions of co-operative. As defined in the international cooperative alliance revised statement on the co-

²Dominique FRUGIER, Caroline VERZAT, Rémi BACHELET, Aïni HANNACHI (2003), « Helping engineers to become entrepreneurs. Attitudes, behaviours, beliefs, skills: what are the educational factors in their entrepreneurial spirit? »

³Rajhi, N. (2006) Conceptualisation de l'esprit entrepreneurial et identification des facteurs de son développement à l'université

operative identity adopted in 1995. A co-operative is “an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise based on the cooperatives principles”⁴. The statement has adopted seven principles accepted by cooperatives around the world as foundational principles for establishing cooperatives, and through which co-operatives put their values into practice. These principles are: (i) Voluntary and open membership, (ii) Democratic member control, (iii) Members’ economic participation, (iv) Autonomy and independence, (v) Education, training and information, (vi) Cooperation, and (vii) Concern for community.

Cooperatives are recognized as an economic group with a strong social responsibility towards the members in particular and the society at large. In addition to these principles, the co-operative paradigm is based upon several other values and ethics such as self-help, self responsibility, equality and solidarity. Moreover, cooperative members acknowledge the ethical value of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others. As form of collective entrepreneurship, cooperatives aim not only to maximize the market profit (economic attribute) but also to reach social (non-economic) settlement of their members (Hendrikse, 2007). Further, the aim of a cooperative is not to make profits to any of the owners but to create benefits to the whole group of members. These benefits are distributed in relation to the members’ patronage. The capital contribution is an absolute

⁴ ICA: International Co-operative Alliance

necessity, yet it has no effect on benefits distribution. Success in the cooperative sector is based on members' participation which is vital for the growth and performance of the entity as a whole (Aini et al, 2012).

Co-operatives in Morocco

The Moroccan co-operative movement continues to make considerable progress not only in terms of creation, but also regarding expanding co-operatives business into new directions, and also in term of innovation of products and services. These facts generate positive impacts on local employment and economy and improve standards of living and social conditions for different beneficiaries as well. The number of co-operatives has increased considerably between 2005 and 2017 from 4.985 to 15.730⁵. The growing number of cooperatives in Morocco serves as a good indication that individuals are willing to create cooperatives in order to improve their living. Moreover, co-operative entrepreneurship is considered as a real alternative to socio-economic inclusion and social cohesion particularly for disadvantaged and out casted localities (Attouch, 2014). Furthermore, this field of business attracts an increasing number of young Moroccans, especially women looking for alternatives of business creation in proximity. These facts are the consequence behind numerous programs of support and promotions for social entrepreneurs.

⁵Data sources: Ministry of Tourism,, Handicraft and Social Economy of the Kingdom of Morocco statistical yearbook 2017.

Conceptual framework of entrepreneurial spirit

Several authors have attempted to dissect the concept of entrepreneurial spirit by defining some of its components. Based on the study of Bachelet et al, we can state that the concept is composed of attitudes and feelings of competences. Adler (1994) defines attitudes as a construction of the mind, which disposes someone to act or to react in certain ways towards something. From this perspective we understand that any link between an individual and an object of any nature implies an attitude. Nandrom and Karelsonson consider the concept of Attitude to be the most appropriate approach to identify entrepreneurship more than demographic traits since it is more related to behaviors than to traits. Furthermore, Shepherd and Douglas (1997) consider attitudes as a projection of intention, the authors distinguished between different forms of attitudes (attitude toward autonomy, financial risk, income, work and attitude towards innovation...). Concepts such as the feeling of efficiency or self-efficacy are also brought into discussion, thereupon it refers to the judgments that people make about their ability to organize and carry out a set of actions that are required to achieve expected types of performance (Bandura, 1986; Salamzadeh, 2018)⁶.

The development of entrepreneurial spirit is thereafter the result of interactions of numerous factors (Bujold and Gingras, 2000)⁷, including individual, contextual determinants, and life experiences of a person. Sever-

⁶Heutte, J. (2011) La théorie du sentiment d'efficacité personnelle (auto-efficacité), <http://jean.heutte.free.fr/spip.php?article158>

⁷ Bujold, C. and Gingras, M. (2000) *Choix professionnel et développement de carrière : théories et recherches*, 2e édition. Montréal :Gaétan Morin éditeur.

al models demonstrate, at least theoretically, how the aforementioned components of the entrepreneurial spirit allow propelling intentions and subsequently behaviors. These include Ajzen's model of planned behavior (1980), Fishbein's reasoned action model, and Shapero & sokol's theory of entrepreneurial event (1982). Additionally, the model of Boissin and Emin (2007) highlights the links of synergy between Ajzen’s model and sokol & Shapero’s.

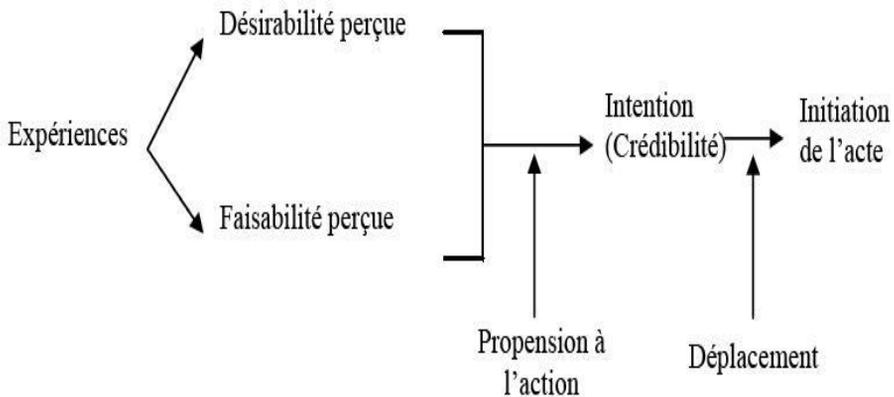


Figure1. Modèle of Shapero by Krueger (1993)

Among a number of theoretical researches, three equally important models are mentioned below:

Table 2. models of entrepreneurial spirit

Models	Authors	Contributions
Model of entrepreneurial intention	Vozikis et Boyd (1994)	A cognitive approach of intention, attempting to identify personal (psychological) factors and contextual (socio-cultural) factors. Attitudes and sense of effectiveness are two basic elements in this model.
Model of the determinants of entrepreneurial intention	Davidson (1995)	It integrates elements of analysis emphasizing internal and external variables of entrepreneurial intention.

Models	Authors	Contributions
Theory of inter-personal behavior	Triandis (1980)	This model integrates elements of the past and previous experiences of entrepreneurs.

In literature the determinants of entrepreneurial spirit are also represented under the title of “*Socialization Factors*” (Nadia Rajhi, 2011; Yvon Gasse, 2003). The entrepreneurial spirit appears within an individual as long as the environment allows it. The phenomenon of socialization is the result of several heterogeneous elements such as family, culture, religion, Medias, professional environment, school system and so on. Thus for Yvon Gasse, (2003), the determinants of Entrepreneurial Spirit can be approached by the study of entrepreneurial culture among an individual’s environment. For this purpose, Gasse presents a rather simplistic model, but carrying several essential elements. The author distinguishes between three key elements of the entrepreneur's profile: (i) *Motivations*: need for achievement, challenges and autonomy..., (ii) *Attitudes*: risk, change, success and failure..., and (iii) *Skills*: trust, Team, perseverance and creativity...

As for Boyd and Vozikis (1994), “*people who have strong beliefs regarding their capabilities will be more persistent in their efforts and will exert greater effort to master a challenge*”⁸. In the light of this assumption, having a look into theories and conceptions regarding entrepreneurial commitment and implication seems crucial.

8 Boyd, N. G. and Vozikis, G. S. (1994) The influence of self-efficacy on the development of entrepreneurial intentions and actions, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*.

Entrepreneurship stills the subject of many interpretations, often vague. Thus, the large number of characteristics assigned to entrepreneurs and their state of mind, makes projecting entrepreneurial theories into social field and to design a model profile of co-operators rather complicated. Building on the fact that entrepreneurial spirit can be measured through the study of both psychological and socio-cultural determinants (Radovic Markovic et al., 2012). The model of Bachelet, Frugieret Hannachi (2004), provides a great assistance.

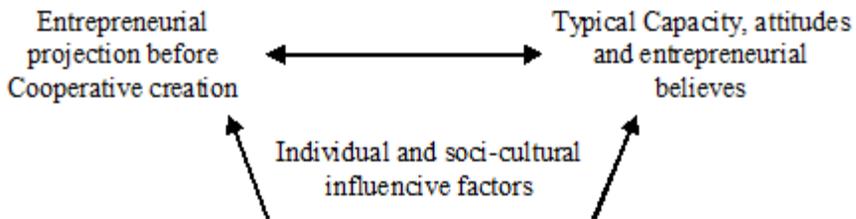


Figure 2. Adapative figure from, Bachelet, Frugier et Hannachi (2004)

Based on this model and assumptions such as theories of disadvantages and personality, we could at a certain way, study a number of entrepreneurial expectations as stated by interviewed co-operants. We tried also to study a number of entrepreneurial attitudes and co-operants skills through the variables presented by the model of Bachelet et al (2003).

Research method

Our methodology was first started with matching between qualitative data collected via explanatory study among several Moroccans experts and quantitative data we looked for, (Creating our questionnaire). These steps allowed us to conduct our statistical procedures to analyze the links between chosen variables and co-operants entrepreneurial traits. For this research, the study sample consists of co-operatives' members of the region Guelmim Oued-Noun. This choice is justified by cultural diversity of this region where the population is composed of numerous ethnic groups, particularly Arabs and Berbers which constitute the large majority of the local population. In addition, the region's cooperative sector has remarkably progressed in recent years. As of the end of 2019, this sector hosts about 1744 cooperatives involving more than 12000 co-operators. To understand the impact of socio-cultural and psychological variables on co-operators' entrepreneurial traits, we employ statistical analysis with a sample of 15 cooperatives involving 114 co-operators. Among the co-operatives sampled in our study, we found five women's co-operatives.

The research methodology adopted to conduct our study is an administrated questionnaire. It was filled through face to face interviews with 114 individuals (co-operators). Several conditions were considered in selecting the sample such as some important aspects like geographic distribution, gender, various economic sectors, level and year of experience and accessibility. The sample was done on the basis of available cooperatives in 5 sectors of activities willing to share with us full information regarding their

activity and access to co-operatives working therein. Data collection was conducted via semi structured interviews within members of selected co-operatives (114 members). Questionnaire was divided into 9 groups of interrogations and analyzed via SPSS. Before hand and given the importance of contextual conditions, several national experts were also consulted, in order to decide which variables and items are the most relevant to the Moroccan context. The study's different factors were limited with the help of 24 Moroccan experts⁹ on the basis of their knowledge and experience. This was in order to obtain further views on a wide range of items, which measure different variables of each factor. Our aim was to understand the effect of contextual factors on co-operators orientations as well as to approach their attitudes, motivations and skills. To assess co-operators cultural orientation and based on Hofstede's model, the contextual factors considered in our paper include the four variables suggested by the author during his longitudinal study.

Table 3. Variables of contextual factors

Variables	Set of elements
Cultural orientation	Individualism
	Collectivism
Relationship between members	Particularism
	Universalism
Attitude to risk and uncertainty	Uncertainty avoidance
	Uncertainty acceptance
Attitude to time	Synchronic cultures
	Sequential cultures

⁹ The experts are mainly responsible in Moroccan administrations which have a direct contact with social entrepreneurs. They were interviewed via an explanatory study..

The analysis of data collected by Hofstede's questionnaire was mainly based on the fact that each response was measured on a 5-points Likert scale, where a score of 1= completely false, 2= partly false, 3= neither true nor false, 4= partly true, 5= completely true. In this context, SPSS was used to analyse this data. As for the study of entrepreneurial co-operants traits, we tried to set up a multidisciplinary representation in order to understand the entrepreneurial motivation and attitudes of co-operants. This form is influenced by several theories and theoretical models. We based our model on the study of Shepherd and Douglas (1997) and Bachelet et al., (2005), who considers attitude as an intention stimulator. According to the authors, entrepreneurial motivation has a serious influence on individuals' entrepreneurial spirit and traits construction through their attitudes and feelings of competences. For that we tried to explain the attitude of co-operants towards several factors. The feeling of effectiveness or self-efficacy¹ (Bandura¹, 1986), were also taken into consideration in the study. We ended up with 4 types of features:

* *Entrepreneurial attitudes*: which refer to internal predispositions to act in certain ways and to follow normative beliefs as regards entrepreneurship.

* *Feelings of entrepreneurial skills or self efficacy*: This refers to the feeling of having entrepreneurial skills). We consider self-efficacy in rela-

¹ The judgments that people make about their ability to organize and carry out sets of actions which are required to achieve the types of performance expected,
Heutte, J. (2011), « La théorie du sentiment d'efficacité personnelle (auto-efficacité) », <http://jean.heutte.free.fr/spip.php?article158>

tion to co-operants, as key-skills in order to identify the potential existence of any entrepreneurial handiness or abilities. Several authors, such as Brockhaus (1982), Bachelet et al (2006), Nadia Rajh (2014) have a tendency to implement the importance of locus control which can be defined as the feeling of controlling the causes and running of an event. It can be alienated in an internal and external locus.

Implementing this variable in our model of study, helped us understand whether the co-operant consider themselves controlling their entrepreneurial event (internal locus) or sees that entrepreneurial event are due to external causes (external locus).

* *Social environment*: it is related to the influence received from the social environment (family, friends etc)

The model of co-operators entrepreneurial traits can be roughly presented in the following diagram.

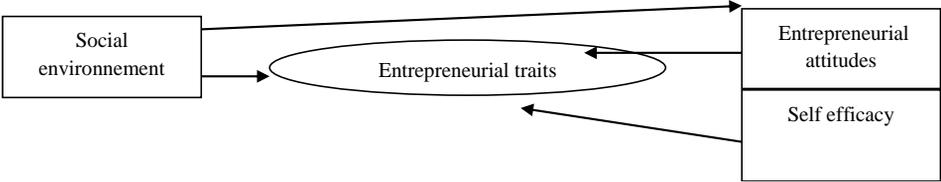


Figure3. study form

Our contextual environment has a serious influence on shaping our attitudes and in determining individual traits (Gartner, 1990; Bygrave 2011; Hernandez, 1999; C. Bruyat, 2002; Gasse, 2004; Bandura, 1997, 2003; Grossetti and Reix, 2014; Bourqia, 2010; Deroïn, 2011). Individuals are the results of their direct environment, as Ibn Khaldun (1406-1332), explained

in his famous book “Al Moquadima”, human being is the result of the environment, the behavior, nature and culture of a person are nothing other than the extension of the elements of the environment and the process of coping with it. It is these elements which bring influence according to the geography and climate. Sociology and psychology are the source of the notion of socialization, and the basis of studies within it. The majority of sociological and anthropological authors assert the absolute influence of society on the individual and all call for socialization in their studies on the development and changes in societies. Durkheim and Weber are notably among authors who put society at the center of their research and analysis. While the work of psychologists, focuses most on the individual, and considers socialization as a process of learning and social anchoring by which an individual prepares to fulfill roles in society (entrepreneurial roles for instance).

Measure of Co-operants attitudes

In order to estimate the interviewed attitudes as regards entrepreneurial motivations and traits, we have selected several attitudes in the relevant literature so as to be able to work out the co-operants attitudes regarding an entrepreneurial behavior. For each attitude, a series of questions were asked, evoking different situations, on the basis of the Biodata technique (Mael, 1991)¹, which allows researchers asking realistic interrogations,

¹ Verzat Caroline and Bachelet Rémi "Developing an Entrepreneurial Spirit among engineering college students: what are the educational factors?" in Fayolle Alain and Klandt Heinz 2006 "International Entrepreneurship Education Issues and Newness".

involving opinions and attitudes. Responses were measured on a 5-points Likert scale. Several items have been taking into consideration based on our literature review (Bachelet et al., 2005). At the end 8 items have been selected.

Table 4. estimated attitudes items

Attitudes variables	Litterature	Realistic interrogations of the questionnaire
Risk taking	Koh (1996)	Risk Aversion level
Responsibility	McClelland (1961)	Previous Responsibilities
Autonomy	Craid (1990, 1991)	Working on one's own or with a group
Innovation		Attitudes towards changes and new working ways
Dynamism		Having extra activities, or working with associations
Initiative		Previous initiatives within the family, friends or at school
Determination	Cromie (2000)	Understanding to which costs co-operants are able to achieve their objectives.
Need for fulfillment	McClelland (1961) Koh (1996)	Setting up personal challenges

Measure of Co-operants skills

The interest behind the study of co-operants skills is to understand the concept of normative beliefs and an individual's values among co-operants. We aimed to identify the professional reference models and the influence of the environment on co-operants entrepreneurial expression and motivations. Chosen items are selected from the study of Shepherd and Douglas (1997) and refined throughout our explanatory study conducted among Moroccan experts.

Table 5. estimated skills items

Co-operant skills	Realistic interrogations of the questionnaire
Working intensely	Making effort and working hard in order to reach personal or group aims...
Making decisions	Making a decision inside the working place...
Future self projections	Understanding the existence of any personal ideas regarding professional project inside or outside the cooperative.
Working with a team	Dealing with stress and issues related to working with a team...
Maintaining a network	Developing further links and relationships to other people...
Being useful for the collectivity	Developing any need for being socially involved in the local community...
Organizational skills	Past or present experiences related to organizing events ...
Seizing opportunities	Benefits from a placement or employment...

Findings

The findings outline the sectors of interviewed cooperatives and their memberships' characteristics. The factors affecting co-operants' entrepreneurial spirit are also discussed, we tried to collect different types of data regarding numerous subjects such as the experience, the entrepreneurial dynamics and curriculum. Other questions were also asked in order to understand the co-operators entrepreneurial traits such as questions regarding the attitudes, the entrepreneurial process, and the place of the religion in the business. Ideas on survival and growth were collected as well.

Table 6. Sectors and cooperatives memberships

Types of cooperatives	Frequency	Percent	Members	
			Man	Women
Agriculture	8	53	44	17
Argan	2	13	2	16
Craft	3	20	0	21
Foodstuffs	1	7	0	7
Literacy and education (school coops)	1	7	2	5
Total	15	100	48	66

As we can see in the form above, most of the selected cooperatives are agricultural (66 per cent including Argans' cooperatives, followed by crafts cooperatives. In terms of membership characteristics, women represent 58 per cent of interviewed members. In fact, women are wildly present in Craft, Argan and Foodstuff's sectors, while agricultural cooperatives attract more male gender. The study findings states that most of respondents were unemployed for long term and they joined the cooperatives in order to acquire their own business (90 per cent of respondents). The majority of them have experiences in the sector of their cooperative and they were oriented by their family or friends. In term of educational level, most of respondents particularly women are illiterate (75 per cent). However, just 8 respondents are indicated having a high educational level (7 per cent of respondents). Considering the origins, 46 of total of respondents are Berbers (40per cent) while 60 per cent are Arabs.

Co-operants entrepreneurial personal motivations

Table 7. Statistics for attitudes variables

CronbachAlpha	StandardisedCronbach Alpha	N of elments
,671	,669	8

Items	Explained vari- ance	Completcorrelati-on	Item Cronbach Alpha
Risk taking	37,841	,730	,511
Responsibility	42,023	,171	,594
Autonomy	40,629	,396	,877
Innovation	32,750	,301	,479
Dynamism	41,902	,259	,561
Initiative	40,629	,519	,875
Determination	40,750	,494	,585
Need for fulfillment	40,265	,425	,891

Table8. Statistics for skills variables

CronbachAlpha	StandardisedCronbach Alpha	N of elments
,686	,686	10

Items	Explained var- iance	Completc correlation	Cronbach Alpha
Working intensely	39,364	,577	,514
Making decisions	43,606	-,087	,501
Future self projections	38,061	,640	,601
Working with a team	39,091	,621	,850
Maintaining a network	39,152	,707	,849
Organizational skills	38,879	,483	,454
Seizing opportunities	39,242	,597	,851
Being useful for the collectivity/society	39,061	,626	,592
Locus control	internal	,376	,789
	external	,244	,859

Discussion

Cultural orientation of co-operatives members

In total the interviewed members' shows that their cooperative paradigm rests on principals of solidarity, equality, equity and reciprocity. Members seek for the collective character of entrepreneurship and organizational vitality. Generally, in the co-operative structure, members cooperate severally to ensure the smooth functioning of their enterprise and achieve common interest for the group as whole. During the study we tried to highlight the cultural dimension of relationship between co-operators as individual and the group to which they belong to. Results of the study shows that more than 80 % of interviewees maintain close links to their entrepreneurial structure (co-operative). Responses among the interviewed members show a strong inter-dependence between co-operants activities and the main cooperative activity in all business fields. Moreover, each co-operant considers the cooperative as their own structure and patrimony. For them, business and personal life are not separated. This shows a strong indication of confidence between co-operatives members but also of cooperation and team spirit. The findings Analysis illustrate the preeminence of collectivist culture between members. This might be justified by cooperation principals and values on which cooperatives standards are based, but also by the supremacy of mutual aid culture that characterizes the Moroccan culture. These results confirm Hofstede's conclusion on the study of divergences between national cultures. The latter has shown that the national cultures of

Asian and African countries have a collectivist orientation, in which the individuals are strongly dependent to the group they belong to.

Relationship between co-operatives members

We also highlighted the relationship between cooperatives members in order to clarify how this can be considered as a determinant of entrepreneurial spirit development. Indeed, our study has emphasized strong links between co-operants. Most of cooperants we interviewed (99 respondents representing 87 per cent) said that the lack of financial and material resources made it impossible to start their own business alone. So the majority find that starting a cooperative is their only way to hold a self-employment.

Risk behavior and attitude to uncertainty

Undertaking business usually depends on risk taking and to the level of attitude towards uncertainty. In this sense, this study in fact highlights that most of the respondents tend to be in complete denial about risk and uncertainty. A majority of them have an apprehensive behavior towards that subject. It is clear that this is the reason why they find cooperative entrepreneurship as a suitable protection towards uncertainty regarding principles on which it is based particularly solidarity and mutuality.

Attitude of co-operators to time

The impact of culture on time management practices is an important factor in every business except among co-operators where our results revealed the absence of planning tools for almost all members of cooperatives. For them, time is conceived as a cycle determined by a set of circumstances to which the behavior of the individual must be adapted. This orientation has often negative effects on cooperatives productivity. It is indeed characterized as stated by Hofstede (2000) as a synchronous culture.

Personal attitudes of co-operants

The data outcomes regarding attitudes variables emphasized the positive impact of entrepreneurial feelings on co-operants entrepreneurial motivations. Though, we did notice the irrelevance of logics such as innovation, dynamism and a low aversion to risk. The need for taking responsibilities and determinations showed as well a low coefficient. This could be explained by the fact that the co-operants way of working doesn't always allow introducing new ways of innovation as well as the fact that a co-operant must follow the decisions of the whole community and can't decide solely. Contrariwise autonomy and the need for fulfillment are the most important attitudes within co-operants.

Personal skills of co-operants

The study of co-operants skills showed a number of interesting specifics, including how shared the interviewed are about the locus control regarding their working. A slight favor goes for the importance of external causes, such as luck and chance, destiny or omnipotence over internal ones. While seizing opportunities and working with a team, seems to be the most important. As for the impact factors like social norms, family environment and identity building of the interviewers, we noticed the effect of both social norms and a significant influence of the family on interviewers' identity. Whereas the results revealed the lack of significant corelation between co-operants education, past experiences and trainings, on their entrepreneurial expression.

Conclusion

Co-operators must definitely pick up certain traits which empower them to attain their intentions reasonably. It is within this framework that the concept of entrepreneurial spirit represents the most adequate outset in order to explain cooperatives entrepreneurial phenomenon. A good number of researches have tried to address the multiplicity of driving factors which determine entrepreneurial spirit and business creation in general. Therefore, it is necessary to question the ability of the existing literature to grasp the reality of the concept of entrepreneurial spirit in social field (cooperatives). Culture, society and individual psychology are endowed with a major importance, influencing the behavior of co-operants and consequently the re-

sults of the business. In Morocco, elements like religion, beliefs and ritual exert a significant influence in shaping attitudes and perceptions of individuals. However, ignoring the importance of cultural variables makes the business beyond the logic of studies supporting the fact that management becomes quite efficient whenever it is connected to local culture.

Studying co-operants motivations and features revealed similarities to those of any other entrepreneurs, yet the difference relies in the relevance of attitudes such as the collectivism, the preeminence of collectivist culture between members, the low aversion to risk and magnitude of a synchronous culture inside cooperatives. Autonomy, initiative and need for fulfillment are the most relevant attitudes of Morocco's Southern Co-operants whereas working within a team and seizing opportunities are the most significant motivations for co-operants. It is also noteworthy to mention the positive influence of the family environment and social norms upon co-operant entrepreneurial career choice.

Generalizing our results on the rest of cooperative members isn't possible yet, our preliminary results concerning co-operants projections about their professional identity unsurprisingly show that entrepreneurial orientation is weak among co-operants. However, a further study is essential in order to assess further items and variables, both psychological and socio-cultural, in order to construct a conception about co-operants entrepreneurial spirit and help understand if there might be further features which differentiate co-operants to other categories of social entrepreneurs and to entrepreneurs in general.

Guidelines and recommendations for further research

Based on the conclusion drawn on this paper, we can provide some implications that may benefit both scholars and policy makers. This is in order to provide actionable insights into possible improvement opportunities for making the Moroccan social entrepreneurship environment to be more attractive and able to enhance jobs creation, especially for youths.

Moroccan government should adopt co-operatives development policy that seeks to improve their performance and innovative capabilities in order to enhance the Moroccan social sector and social entrepreneurship environment in general. This policy should include a strategy for strengthening the overall legal and institutional co-operatives framework and their governance system. The country's strategy should also be oriented towards the promotion of co-operative creation and their diversification, which can provide employment and income opportunities and contribute to both social and economic growth.

During our study we have noticed that education impact on business success is almost irrelevant among co-operants. In fact, the sector of co-operatives in Morocco host most of the time people with low or without any education backgrounds. In front of such fact, there is an urgent need to make a change at all levels of education of the current Moroccan education system, especially regarding what is being taught and methods used in teaching. This is for enabling students to acquire required competencies needed to meet the requirements of labour market, so they can compete locally and internationally. Improvements need to be applied to develop relevant ele-

ments where the priority should be given to reforms, funding systems and government regulations related to co-operative entrepreneurship.

In addition, co-operants are in deep need for training courses in order to update their competencies over time. The linkages between education system and labour market should be enhanced. To this end, entrepreneurship education can have a role, and should be available for all co-operants, with a more focus on knowledge and skills needed to manage a business. It should provide a better understanding of the entrepreneurial skills. Hence, education and training related to entrepreneurship should perhaps pay more attention to Social entrepreneurship in Morocco as a relevant aspect which still get limited attention but could play an important role for social inclusion and economic growth.

Overall, it should be indicated that, understanding the Moroccan co-operatives traits and environment is fraught with difficulty and ambiguity: Which factors should be studied? Which variables are still relevant? What differences exist between co-operators of different region of Morocco? What differences exist between co-operators and classic entrepreneurs? This paper still insufficient to identified a rigorous evidence base on these questions. Thus, further work is needed to push these primary insights forward and more research and studies are required to monitoring the possible options to understand co-operators framework and judge the different sources of influence which relays behind their motivations and orientations.

Due to the limitation of studies related to the co-operants traits in Morocco, an assessment of social-entrepreneurship as a promising area of

research is crucial in order to understand the possible improvement opportunities for promoting cooperatives environment in the Kingdom. We hope that this paper shall serve as guidance and scientific reflection for scholars and policy makers interested in this important field.

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