The dynamics of SME creation: the entrepreneur facing territorial determinants of the wilaya de Bejaia

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Abstract: Business creation is seen as a fundamental strategic act in the sense that it is a tool for economic and social development. It enables the regeneration of the local productive fabric, creates jobs, enhances knowledge, transfers technology, develops creativity, innovation and contributes to wealth creation. The entrepreneur is at the origin of all strategic decisions, but is also the product of the environment to which he belongs. The quality of the territory is a parameter not to be neglected in the sense that it is more considered as a partner of the entrepreneurial act and as a basic resource for the entrepreneur. This article aims to understand the territorial factors determining the dynamics of business creation in the locality of Bejaia (Algiers), to identify characteristic features that will enable us to identify the typical profile of the entrepreneur from this region at the same time as the logic of perception of the territory of entrepreneurs. To do this, we will first present a review of the literature in order to draw a conceptual framework related to the subject of the study, then we will present the results of a field survey conducted with a sample of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the locality of Bejaia (Algiers) complemented by a series of semi-structured interviews with the entrepreneurs interviewed. **Key words:** business creation, entrepreneur, territory, entrepreneurial dynamics, attachment to the territory.

La dynamique de création de PME: l'entrepreneur face aux déterminants territoriaux de la wilaya de Bejaia

Résumé : La création d'entreprise est considérée comme un acte stratégique fondamental en ce sens qu'elle est un outil de développement économique et social. Il permet la régénération du tissu productif local, crée des emplois, valorise les connaissances, transfère la technologie, développe la créativité, l'innovation et contribue à la création de richesse. L'entrepreneur est à l'origine de toutes les décisions stratégiques, mais est aussi le produit de l'environnement auquel il appartient. La qualité du territoire est un paramètre à ne pas négliger dans le sens où il est davantage considéré comme un partenaire de l'acte entrepreneurial et comme une ressource de base pour l'entrepreneur. Cet article vise à comprendre les facteurs territoriaux déterminant la dynamique de création d'entreprise dans la localité de Bejaia (Algérie), à identifier les traits caractéristiques qui nous permettront d'identifier le profil type de l'entrepreneurs. Pour ce faire, nous présenterons d'abord une revue de la littérature afin de dresser un cadre conceptuel lié au sujet de l'étude, puis nous présenterons les résultats d'une enquête de terrain menée auprès d'un échantillon de petites et moyennes entreprises (PME) dans la localité de Bejaia (Algérie) complétée par une série d'entretiens semi-structurés avec les entrepreneurs interrogés.

Mot-clés : création d'entreprise, entrepreneur, territoire, dynamique entrepreneuriale, attachement au territoire.

Introduction

A very rich and extremely diversified literature is devoted to the phenomenon of business creation, especially since it is considered as a fundamental strategic act in the sense that it constitutes a tool for economic and social development. As such, it should be noted that the creation of business is conceptualized long ago in the expression "entrepreneurial phenomenon" or simply in the polysomic term of "entrepreneurship" or "entrepreneurship". Entrepreneurship brings together in its semantic field everything related to business creation, business resumption, spin-offs, development of existing businesses, territories...

Entrepreneurship in general and business creation in particular is, according to many authors, one of the levers of the economy, particularly in terms of regeneration of the local productive fabric, jobs, the exploitation of knowledge, transfer of technology, creativity, innovation and wealth.

Moreover and very often is associated with the very act of creating a company the entrepreneur who is at the origin of any strategic decision, defining himself as the initiator of any new organization, as at the origin of the very idea of a project. The entrepreneur refers to this obstinate individual to the realization of a project idea, of which he is the bearer, in the form of an organization.

The entrepreneurial act is often preceded by a key factor: willingness and an intention to undertake. This intention in turn depends on factors specific to the entrepreneur and others that are dictated by the environment. These psychological, socioeconomic and cultural factors have been the subject of much research and have inspired the model of the entrepreneurial event (Shapero and Sokol, 1982, Krueger, 1993), the theory of entrepreneurial culture (Kostova, 1997, Hayton, George and Zohra 2002) and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The environment may, however, be a limit to the behavior of the potential entrepreneur, in the sense that he acts on the acting out decisions. There is no need to insist at this level on the need to encourage and develop entrepreneurship within companies, regardless of size, structure, sector of activity, what is commonly referred to by the qualifier: entrepreneurship or corporate entrepreneurship. It is in this sense that incentives and incentives for entrepreneurship are increasingly taking place in national, regional and local policies with the aim of stimulating growth, development and the flourishing of the entrepreneurial phenomenon. On the other hand, it would be wise to admit that the realization of the decision to start a business is not only linked to the qualities and skills of the entrepreneur, the environment, the business climate and the environment in which Emerging and evolving businesses created are key variables for sustainability and growth.

This article aims to understand the territorial factors determining the dynamics of business creation that the locality of Bejaia knows, to identify characteristic features that are able to allow us to identify the typical profile of the entrepreneur of this region as well as the logic of perception of the territory of entrepreneurs. To do this, we will first present a review of the literature with a view to finding a conceptual framework related to the subject of the study, then we will present the results of a field survey conducted with a sample of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the locality of Bejaia complemented by a series of semi-structured interviews with the entrepreneurs interviewed.

1. CORPORATE CREATION: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur

Considered as an economic, social, political and individual phenomenon, entrepreneurship itself is a heterogeneous, controversial and complex phenomenon that is difficult to confine to a single definition. This practice is also considered as a discipline in its own right, the contours of which lie at the borders of many other disciplines (management sciences, economics, sociology, psychology ...). Indeed, there is no consensus on a precise definition of entrepreneurship in general and the entrepreneur in particular. The absence of a standardized and universally accepted definition of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship is, according to Hernandez and Marco, one of the main

obstacles to the advancement of knowledge in this field and to the construction of a general theory (Hernandez EM and Marco L, 2006. P 13). The very notion of entrepreneurship has been enriched by the advent of industrial capitalism and the unprecedented development of economic thought. Coster defined entrepreneurship and implicitly the entrepreneurial phenomenon as follows: "Entrepreneurship is the phenomenon of emergence and exploitation of new creative opportunities of economic and social value, driven and made possible by the initiative and the dynamic of innovation / changes of a man, the entrepreneur, interacting with his environment. The central axis of the phenomenon is the creative process that moves and structures the dynamic man / project to lead to an entrepreneurial configuration likely to successfully exploit the desired opportunity. "(Coster M, 2009. P19).

Entrepreneurship refers to individual initiative whose roots are drawn from methodological individualism (Messeghem K and Sammut S, 2011. P7). Many researchers have studied this phenomenon of society by focusing their work on the study of the entrepreneur as an individual with specific aspirations, motivations and perceptions. All the approaches that deal with the entrepreneur stress that the entrepreneur is a person who conveys a set of characteristics that differentiates him from the others, so to speak, to clear the entrepreneurial profile.

The design of the entrepreneur aspires a way of thinking (entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial culture ...), individual or collective behaviors (risk taking, sense of responsibility, initiative, development and exploitation of opportunities ...), and diversified situations (creation of companies within existing companies, within an association ...) (Degeorge JM et al, 2010. P 10).

1.2. Territorial determinants of business creation

At the same time as States became aware of the role that SMEs can play in economic growth and the elimination of unemployment, many researchers have focused on identifying the deterministic factors of business creation. Nevertheless, identifying these determinants is not an easy task, and consensus about the precise determinants of the entrepreneurial act is non-existent in its turn. The specification of these determinants is imperative for the definition of the contours of a territorial policy; it determines its outcome and improves its efficiency.

The study and analysis of the determinants of entrepreneurship can be twofold: a macroeconomic (national and regional) level and a microeconomic (more the individual, the business creator).

Studies on the identification of regional variables that are conducive to entrepreneurship agree that there is a correlation between the level of unemployment on a regional scale, the degree of SMEs and entrepreneurial intensity. For example, regions with high unemployment rates and / or an underdeveloped SME sector have low start-up rates. On the other hand, regions with a low unemployment rate and a highly developed SME sector have very high start-up rates.

In his study of the macroeconomic parameters that would impact the entrepreneurial act, (Giacomin O et al 2007) build on the work of Robson (1996) who showed the positive influence of the real GDP growth rate on 'business. Contrary to this point of view, Giacomin says that the unemployment rate would have a negative impact (Giacomin et al, 2007. P 5). However, many authors have contradicted this last point, Giacomin et al build in this case on the work of (Fotti and Vivarelli , 1993) according to which the job losses in a region is a stimulating factor for the entrepreneurial act. He even reviews the work of (Noorderhaven et al, 2004) in which he notes that a high level of GDP per capita is associated with a low level of self-employment.

From a microeconomic analysis point of view, unemployment is a factor in business creation. To support this finding, (Giacomin et al,2007) return to the results of a study by Mason (1989) on individual motivations for business creation, according to which the economic situation would have a role to play. This study was conducted on two groups of individuals, the first having created their businesses during the pre-recession period (1976-1979) and the second group of individuals who created their businesses during a recession (post-1979 period). So in pre-recession times, individuals would be motivated by pull factors, tending that in times of recession they would be motivated by pull theory is a behavioral model developed to explain individual

motivations for business creation. The push-type entrepreneurial approach is a defensive reaction of the entrepreneur to the labor market, in other words to escape unemployment, or to circumvent personal difficulties, which is called necessity entrepreneurship. Swing dynamics or opportunity entrepreneurship, for its part, represents a proactive and offensive approach, in the sense that it results from professional aspirations, the origin of which can be made to the existence of market opportunities.

Drawing this time on the work of (Ritsilä and Tervo, 2002), the authors describe the impact of unemployment on creation by stating that individuals who have been unemployed for a short time (i.e., from 1 to 8 months) have a higher propensity to create businesses than the long-term unemployed (9 to 12 months). Although the impact of the unemployment factor on business creation is widely accepted, other factors have been identified by other authors. This is the case, for example, of precarious employment, low wages or lack of career prospects. Finally, Giacomin et al put forward, to quote the results of (Pfeiffer and Reize, 2000), that the life span of SMEs created by unemployed workers is lower than those created by workers (Giacomin O et al, 2007. P 5).

Despite the strength of the push-pull model analysis, it was strongly criticized for the fact that it was confined to taking into account the role of unemployment only. The model would benefit from being more realistic by expanding the list of motivations to other factors. Although the exact delimitation of these is not easy, it is possible to return to those that have been most stated in the economic literature. From there, it seems that the identity component is a significant factor in the entrepreneurial process, adding to that the socio-cultural characteristics (social position, biographical trajectory ...) that have an impact on the perception of reality.

2. PRESENTATON AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF FIELD INVESTIGATION

For the construction of our target sample, we used the database of the Directorate of Small and Medium Enterprises of the locality of Bejaia and that of the National Fund of Unemployment Insurance (CNAS). From there, we could identify the sectors present and especially the most dominant in the local economy of the locality. The latter is in this sense a region for agribusiness but a large number of companies also belong to the sector of Building and Public Works.

To achieve our objectives a questionnaire, comprising several items organized in different axes, was administered to the managers of the SMEs surveyed. This questionnaire was subsequently supplemented by a series of semi-structured interviews whose purpose is to understand aspects that the questionnaire would not have highlighted. In particular, it is a question of clarifying some of the answers provided when completing the questionnaire.

We initially targeted 270 Small and Medium Enterprises operating in the various sectors of activity present in the studied territory. We have, of course, taken care to distribute a larger number of questionnaires to the sectors that dominate the local economy of the locality of Bejaia (agribusiness and construction).

Sectors of activity	Target sample	Number respondents	of	Response rate
Food	60	46		76,67
ВТР	50	26		52,00
Chemistry, Rubber and plastic	38	32		84,21
Wood, paper and packaging	36	20		55 ,56
ISMME	34	22		64,71
Textile industry	28	12		42,86
Services	24	8		33,33
Total	270	166		61,48

Table 1: Size and Structure of the Targeted and Final Sample

Source: developed by us from the field investigation, Bejaia 2018.

In the end, our sample includes 166 SMEs, representing a response rate of over 60% with representativeness rates in each of the sectors of activity that reflect fairly well the demographic characteristics of the SME population in the study area. We believe that these results are largely exploitable while being aware that these cannot be extrapolated to the entire population of SMEs of the locality of Bejaia. Most of our sample consists of businesses in the small business category (employing less than 50 employees), representing 192 units representing more than 71% of the sample. These results represent fairly well the reality of the field within the studied territory, since the official statistics of the Direction of the SME confirm the predominance of this category in the total population of companies of the locality. We also note the youth of the companies surveyed where more than 65% of the sample is composed of companies less than five years old. Moreover, more than 60% of the sample includes cases of newly created companies (what is commonly called "ex-nihilo" creations), the rest of the cases are reversals of which 20% represent cases of reworking.

2.1. The entrepreneur of the locality of Bejaia: profile-type and motivations

2.1.1. Typical profile of the contractors surveyed

The sample studied is mainly composed of men, rather married whose age varies for nearly 80% of them between 30 and 60 years. These results are not surprising, quite the contrary, they correspond fairly well to the typical profile of the Algerian entrepreneur released by studies conducted in this direction. We also observe that the sample studied does not include entrepreneurs belonging to the age group under thirty. This can be explained, on the one hand, by the fact that the youngest ones rarely go into the business world, often because of a lack of professional experience and financial resources, and because the companies set up by young entrepreneurs are less likely to survive the first years of creation, on the other hand.

Gender	Workforce	Percentage
Male	154	92,77%
Female	12	07,22%
Total	166	100%
Marital status	Workforce	Percentage
Married	154	92,77%
Single	04	02,41%
Divorced	02	01,20%
Widower	06	03,61%
Total	166	100%
Age groups	Workforce	Percentage
(30-39 years)	34	20,48%
(40-49 years old)	74	44,58%
(50-59 years old)	38	22,89%
60 years and over	20	12,05%
Total	166	100%

Table 2: Distribution of contractors surveyed

Source: field survey, Bejaia 2018.

With only twelve companies created by women, the share of these is almost negligible, which again reflects the reality of the national economy as demonstrated by various works done in this direction. Indeed, women like to take less risk; they aspire to a lot more social stability. Moreover, the rather masculine component of the business world is, in a way, a brake on the development of women's entrepreneurship. This can also be perceived, as supported by Giacomin et al (2007), as the result of the reproduction of a cultural model associated with the transmission of social positions that privilege men.

2.1.2. More educated and territorially embedded entrepreneurs

The cross-examination of the respondents' answers according to their geographical origin and their level of education enabled the construction of the following table:

Table 3: Crossing of data by level of education and geographical origin Geographic origin

Educational level	From Bejaia locality	Percentage	Other regions
Primary and middle level	10	06,02%	00
Secondary level	18	10,84%	00
University level	56	33,74%	00
Professional training	82	49,40%	00
Total	166	100%	00

Source: field survey, Bejaia 2018.

All of the individuals surveyed created their businesses in the region where they were born. This suggests a lack (or absence) of professional mobility but possibly a particular attachment to the region. We will try to verify these assumptions in the rest of this work. The majority of them (138 respondents, which corresponds to 83.16% of the total sample) are graduates from universities or vocational training centers. These results reflect the positive correlation between the level of education and the decision to embark on the entrepreneurial adventure. This finding is again in line with other work in this direction, which emphasizes that entrepreneurs with a relatively high level of education would be more likely to survive the first few years of business start-ups.

2.1.3. Motivations for business creation: Default entrepreneurship rather than vocation and conviction

Since the issue of reasons for creation involves multiple responses, we proceeded to construct a cross-tabulation to highlight the possible combinations of respondents' answers. A summary illustrating the most frequently mentioned answers is provided in the table below.

Reasons for creation	Frequency	percentage
Create your own job	82	30,37%
Participate in the development of the region	52	19,26%
Business opportunity	49	18,15%
Professional experience in the field	32	11 ,85%
Imitating a family success	20	07,41%
Incentives and public aid	13	04,82%
To practice an ancestral profession	13	04,81%
Other	09	03,33%

Table 4: Motivations for business creation

Source: field survey, Bejaia 2018.

Self-employment is, in the case of our sample, the most frequently mentioned reason. In fact, nearly one-third (1/3) of the respondents said that they had created businesses to run their own businesses, which is commonly known as "necessity entrepreneurship". On this subject, some of the entrepreneurs with whom we spoke, revealed that graduates of vocational training centers were more likely to advance this reason but also holders of university degrees who claim that their specialties are not required on the market and find it difficult to fit into it. This orientation is also part of the new approach adopted by many states around the world, like Algeria, which consists in encouraging the unemployed to become bosses through the creation of their own jobs. In this respect, there is a great deal of work that asserts that these new individual entrepreneurs enjoying

total freedom, who have virtually defeated hierarchical constraints, working hours, will represent the new dominant social group constituting the unquestionable substitute for wage company.

Just over a quarter (1/4) of the surveyed population wants to participate in the development of the region. The presence of a business opportunity is a reason mentioned by 49 entrepreneurs. In addition, 32 entrepreneurs claim that their professional experiences were the factor that motivated them to embark on the entrepreneurial adventure. In twenty cases, it is a question of imitating a member (even several members) of their direct entourage. To practice an ancestral profession is a motive evoked by thirteen entrepreneurs. The public incentives motivated only thirteen individuals. Finally, in nine cases respondents chose the "other answer" option. During the interviews, the availability of capital is the most frequently mentioned factor, in that it represents a basic component of the decision to start a business and a stimulating factor in the decision to undertake. According to them, this allows them to avoid one of the most common obstacles to entrepreneurial action.

2. Entrepreneurship and territorial logic

2.1. Factors at the origin of the choice of localization: an affirmed territorial anchorage and a disabling occupational immobility

Location factors	YES	NO	TOTAL
Proximity to the place of residence	70	96	166
Availability of resources and infrastructure	56	110	166
Proximity of the market	52	114	166
Knowledge of the region	48	118	166
Public aid	08	158	166

Table 5: Factors at the origin of the choice of location

Source: field survey, Bejaia 2018.

The entrepreneurs surveyed choose to locate their businesses near their place of residence. This factor is cited by 70 business leaders. This prompts us to verify our assumption previously made related to the existence of a possible attachment to the region, especially since this result can be correlated with the observations we have previously noted concerning the respondents' strong desire to participate in the development of the region. Which, in our opinion, implies a certain attachment to the native region? The interviews conducted with the entrepreneurs enabled us to confirm this conclusion since they openly testified to their attachment to the region, while admitting also their professional immobility and lack of risk taking. Indeed, the interviewees have openly revealed that they do not tend to take risks by venturing on land unknown to them, on the one hand. In addition, their family responsibilities are an element to take into account since they limit their professional mobility, on the other hand. In 56 cases, it is the availability of resources at the local level that seems to be at the base of the choice of location. The wilaya of Bejaia enjoys a geographical location that places it in a culturally and socially conducive environment to the proliferation and concentration of businesses. The basic infrastructure, the proximity of the port and the airport give the locality of the status of a "logistic" environment. Businesses seem to be benefiting not only from local resources but also from the agglomeration of companies, adding to this the existence of three industrial zones and nearly thirty areas of activity. In addition, the locality of Béjaia has benefited from a long-term program for the creation of two new industrial zones spread over a total area of 320 hectares, at the localities of El Kseur and Beni Mansour.

Proximity to the market ranks third among the items proposed. In this case, the correlation between the geographical proximity and the choice of location is verified for our sample, so that the existence of an upstream and downstream market seems to favor the dynamics of business creation and localization. Knowledge of the region is a factor in 48 cases placing this factor in fourth place. It is important for respondents to locate in an environment that is familiar to them. During the interviews, they mentioned the fact that the knowledge of the region was an advantage they exploit in this sense. This allows them, among other things, to benefit from a relational capital built since

their childhood and to limit risks. It is often a question of appealing to family members or friends for questions of financing, for the acceleration of extremely long administrative procedures, to make up for any blockage likely to prevent the good progress of the procedure of creation and hiring members of the family (family character of the SME). Public support does not seem to have a significant impact on the choice of location of the companies in the sample. This result is certainly the result of the lack of industrial land which limits the power of the state in terms of business location. This situation leads to fairly significant spatial imbalances in the distribution of activities and even populations.

2.2. Territorial rooting

The first aspect of the territorial rooting of the individuals interviewed has already been apprehended by the choice of location factors that we have explained previously. In fact, the results of the survey on these factors led to the fact that entrepreneurs started their businesses in Bejaia because they are native and resident there. This aspect is particularly interesting since it suggests a certain territorial attachment. Especially since when it came to seeking their motivations to create businesses, one of the reasons advanced was their desire to contribute to the development of the region. At first glance, we wanted to deepen this question by seeking to assert the attachment of these entrepreneurs to this region which will, in a sense, accentuate their territorial roots. Indeed, according to Benslymen "(...) the attachment gives the place a particular value, which makes the removal of this place difficult and difficult. The fate of the place is essential for the individual "(Benslymen S, 2014. P 45).

a. The attachment to the region

Table 6: Degree of attachment to the region

Degree of attachment	Frequencies	Percentage
Very important	43	51,81%
Important	33	39,76%
Not important	7	08,43%
General total	83	100 %

Source: field survey, Bejaia 2018.

The results recorded in the table support our assumption by asserting a territorial rooted in the commitment of entrepreneurs to the region. As a result, 89.76% of those surveyed said they were very attached to the study area. This attachment can be considered as a determinant of the entrepreneurial dynamic observed in the locality of Bejaia. These results allow us to deduce the existence of an affective dimension with a very important social connotation that materializes in the form of a very strong attachment of entrepreneurs interviewed in the territory. Indeed, the attachment to the territory, which describes the relationship of the individual to his environment, implies according to Benslymen (2014) the development of a sense of belonging that brings together different dimensions: cognitive, affective, conative in terms of identity, attachment and attitude towards the region (Benslymen S, 2014. P44).

B. The conception of the territory

To consolidate the previous results, we undertook to question entrepreneurs about their perception of the territory. This perception is, in our opinion, an imperative for the development of logic and a territorial project. Is the territory in the design of these entrepreneurs apprehended as an objective source of factors of production or is it more considered as a space to develop and support?

Territory design	Frequency	Percentage
As sources of production factors	21	12,65%
As a space to build and develop	145	87,35%
Total	166	100 %

Table 7: Distribution of Contractors by Territory Design

Source: field survey, Bejaia 2018.

The territory is designed by more than 87% of the sample as a space to build and develop. This is to say that they are aware of the importance of the territorial component for the sustainability of their businesses. Moreover, during our interviews, the interviewed entrepreneurs considered that they contributed effectively to territorial development. This contribution is materialized by the job positions created by these entrepreneurs, by the regulation of taxes and taxes, by the generation of added value and finally by the supply of goods and services provided to the local population.

Conclusion

The results of the survey allowed us to identify the typical profile of the entrepreneurs interviewed. The entrepreneur studied is more a man, married, aged 30 to 60, with a university degree or vocational training thus indicating the existence of a positive correlation between the level of education of entrepreneurs interviewed and the decision to embark on the business world. He is native and resident of the locality of Bejaia. He creates his company to stay there testifying of a rather pronounced territorial anchorage but also of a restrictive and handicapping professional immobility which is returned to his family responsibilities. Also, the territory is for the interviewed entrepreneur the place where the family logics and the entrepreneurial practices intertwine to contribute to improve the chances of survival and growth of the created company. Indeed, the existence of family logic and a life project accentuate the territorial integration that is more assimilated to a cognitive and relational embedding. This territory is also the place where networks of social relations have been built to form a cognitive proximity.

Self-employment seems to be the key determinant of business creation dynamics for our sample. The creation of enterprises for the respondents represents above all an alternative to unemployment, a practice more encouraged by the incentives adopted by the public authorities. In these conditions, entrepreneurship becomes a necessity entrepreneurship motivated by push factors.

A draft of territorial logic seems to take place, so that the individuals questioned, in addition to the cognitive and relational dimensions, consider the territory as a space to develop. This means that these individuals are aware of the more than decisive nature of territorial development. So that the territory is perceived as a partner of the entrepreneurial act, thus favoring the local dynamics of business creation on the one hand, and a non-negligible resource that it is more than necessary to support and develop, on the other hand share.

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