



The Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship to the Local Development of Taroudant Province (Morocco): Case of Argan Cooperatives Subsidized by the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH)

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ABSTRACT

This paper of social and solidarity economy, aimed at studying the contribution of social entrepreneurship to local development. By surveying the conceptual and evolutionary origins of key concepts, we have developed a conceptual model that addresses a variety of theories likely to reveal the evolutionary origins of local development, where social entrepreneurship is considered in its cooperative form as a lever for local development. The study examines the interrelation between social entrepreneurship and local development. Empirically, the problematic of this paper seeks to highlight these interrelations and illustrate the importance of social entrepreneurship in relation to local development, and it aims to clarify the remarkable growth experienced by the argan cooperatives in Taroudant province thanks to the major cooperative movement that significantly marks this region. To what extent do the argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH contribute to the local development of Taroudant? Hypotheses are established based on a literature review, defining the items to retain for each variable. We retained the level of activity and turnover for the economic dimension, job creation for the social dimension, education and training for the cultural dimension. Methodologically, a quantitative approach was conducted through administering a questionnaire to the target population, namely the 15 cooperatives identified following a preliminary survey conducted in Taroudant province on the beneficiaries of the said subsidy. It seemed more prudent to proceed with statistical tests to address potential correlations that could skew our results. The collected data were then processed using SPSS software version 23. The outputs demonstrate the validation of the first two hypotheses and the rejection of the last one. In other words, these cooperatives positively contribute to the local development of Taroudant province through economic and social dimensions. However, the positive effect via the cultural dimension is not demonstrated.

Keywords:

Social entrepreneurship, Social and Solidarity Economy, Local development, Cooperative, Taroudant.

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1970s, ongoing developments have made social entrepreneurship a significant theme in the social and solidarity economy and a key concept in development. It has generated strong interest from policymakers, economists, researchers, practitioners, and the general public related to the globalization of economies. These developments have contributed to destabilizing existing economic systems, causing socio-economic problems, particularly in emerging and developing countries. The widening gap between countries, depletion of natural resources, emerging issues related to poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion have intensified with the acceleration of economic internationalization.

Most definitions of social entrepreneurship are linked to innovative solutions leading to social change. The OECD defines social entrepreneurship as an "enterprise aiming to provide innovative solutions to unresolved social problems" (OECD, 2010). Thus, social entrepreneurship is one form of entrepreneurship that pertains to organizations within the social economy, characterized by solidarity and social utility principles. These organizations include cooperatives, the focus of our practical research. This type of social enterprise operates within a regulatory framework involving democratic management modes, making them socially significant for both their founders and the surrounding environment, broadly benefiting the hosting locales.

The concept of local development is emphasized here. According to scientific literature, local development represents the will of elected officials to attract investors to their territories to address employment creation deficiencies. The development path depends on local resources rather than waiting for "miracle" companies to favor territorial implantation. According to Mengin (2004), "Solidarity economy organizations do not establish themselves through simple opportunities; the territory is an essential component of their activity and development, unlike many companies that move as soon as more financially attractive opportunities arise elsewhere."

Morocco, a developing country, has not been an exception to the global trend, recognizing the necessity of promoting socially responsible entrepreneurship. As part of its national social and solidarity economy strategy, it chose the INDH in 2005. Sectoral strategies (Tourism 2020, Handicrafts 2020, Green Morocco, etc.) and other social programs have multiplied in recent years to promote the National Initiative for Human Development, a major effort to combat instability and social exclusion.

In this context, social entrepreneurship is an alternative solution to the challenges posed by socio-economic crises, particularly for cooperatives aiming to place economic activity at the service of humanity, creating a viable, sustainable model generating social value—a local development model ultimately.

This article aims to study the contribution of social entrepreneurship through cooperatives subsidized by the INDH in 2020 to the local development of Taroudant province. Attempting to address this issue, we also aim to answer the following question: "To what extent do the argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH contribute to the local development of Taroudant province?" The analysis of this contribution is based on three dimensions: economic, social, and cultural. We developed a conceptual model to clarify the connections and formulated three main hypotheses subject to our tests:

H1: The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the economic dimension;

H2: The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the social dimension;

H3: The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the cultural dimension.

Methodologically, we opted for a quantitative approach using a questionnaire to collect data from the 15 argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH in Taroudant province, as only these 15 benefited from this subsidy in 2020. A preliminary survey conducted with the service responsible for allocating subsidies to these organizations in Taroudant province helped define our population, totalling 15. To collect reliable and credible information, we ensured that the respondents were responsible persons within these structures. The collected data will be analysed using descriptive statistical techniques with SPSS version 23 software.

Our work is structured around five main axes. The first axis is dedicated to the conceptual and theoretical origins of the key concepts; the second axis addresses the role of social entrepreneurship in local development; the third axis is devoted to the adopted methodology and study variables. The fourth axis deals with the analysis of results, leading to the fifth axis, which discusses these results.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Entrepreneurship and Local Development: Conceptual Insight

In an interconnected world, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful force for local development. This innovative approach combines the passion and mission of a social cause with the discipline and innovation of business practices. Social entrepreneurship is a dynamic and transformative approach to addressing social issues through innovative business solutions. Unlike traditional businesses focused solely on profit, social entrepreneurs prioritize social impact alongside financial sustainability. They identify pressing problems within their communities—such as poverty, lack of education, or environmental degradation—and develop creative, market-driven solutions to tackle these challenges. By leveraging entrepreneurial principles, they create ventures that not only generate revenue but also contribute to the well-being of society. Local development is significantly enhanced through the efforts of social entrepreneurs, as they bring fresh perspectives and resources to communities in need. By addressing specific local issues with tailored solutions, social entrepreneurs help to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and improve access to essential services. Their ventures often involve collaboration with local stakeholders, ensuring that the initiatives are culturally relevant and sustainable in the long term. Additionally, social entrepreneurs often reinvest their profits back into the community, further amplifying their impact. Through their innovative and community-centric approach, social entrepreneurs play a crucial role in building resilient, inclusive, and thriving local economies.

The main point of this part is to clarify as far as possible the key concepts namely social entrepreneurship and local development.

The Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship first appeared as a sub-field of entrepreneurship in its early development stages, juxtaposed with other sub-fields such as enterprise concepts (Halaissi and Boumkhaled, 2018). Social entrepreneurship, as defined today, is a recent concept dating back to the 1990s, when the United States and Western Europe were pioneers, notably through the social enterprise initiative launched by Harvard University. Business schools, followed by Columbia University, Yale University, and various foundations, have established training and support programs for social entrepreneurs and social enterprises in the U.S. In Europe, social entrepreneurship first emerged in Italy, creating a specific position for social cooperatives to address unmet public service needs. During this period, other European countries like Belgium, Finland, France, the UK, Spain, and others saw the emergence of new entrepreneurial motivations with social aims (Alexandre, 2013).

Dees (1998) describes social entrepreneurship as combining "the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline, innovation, and determination." He offered an idealistic vision of social entrepreneurs who should act as change agents in the social sector by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value;
- Relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve this mission;
- Engaging in continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning;
- Acting boldly without being constrained by current resources;
- Exhibiting heightened accountability to the communities served and the outcomes achieved.

Bacq and Janssen (2011) noted that social entrepreneurship and associated concepts are complex, multifaceted phenomena that cannot be standardized or universally accepted. They define social entrepreneurship as managing a system of dual equations: a social mission on one side and commercial activities on the other. Therefore, all definitions should at least illustrate these tensions between the social mission and commercial activities.

Roberts and Woods (2005) consider social entrepreneurship as constructing, evaluating, and pursuing opportunities for social transformation driven by visionary and passionate individuals. Definitions of social entrepreneurship vary. For the OECD, social entrepreneurship is defined as "any private activity of public interest, organized with an entrepreneurial approach, not primarily aimed at maximizing profits but at achieving certain economic and social objectives and the ability to provide innovative solutions to problems of exclusion and unemployment."

In this perspective, social entrepreneurship involves increasingly specialized social entrepreneurs. Existing or emerging social and solidarity economic organizations adopt entrepreneurial methods and formal management tools to better respond to societal demands (Dardour, 2012). To distinguish social entrepreneurship from classic entrepreneurship, it is essential to note that the primary focus of social entrepreneurship is on its social mission. Social enterprises seek to address social needs expressed in the form of general or collective interests that neither the private nor the public sector can satisfy. Classic entrepreneurship primarily aims to seek financial profits while considering the needs of customers, consumers, shareholders, or producers. Social enterprises can also complement classic enterprises' activities (Zahra et al., 2013). Tan et al. (2005) offer a broader interpretation of social entrepreneurship, emphasizing that both economic and social missions are crucial. However, the dominant position of the social mission is vital, as it distinguishes this type of enterprise, and the existence of social needs presents opportunities for social entrepreneurs.

Omrane and Fayolle (2010) confirm that social entrepreneurship involves three fundamental elements: (i) determining a stable balance and excluding or marginalizing social groups unable to alter market equilibrium, (ii) identifying opportunities and developing new social values, and (iii) establishing a new balance to ensure a better future for the group and society. The essence of social entrepreneurship lies in discovering and leveraging business opportunities by identifying unmet social and economic needs, aiming to create social value.

Boutillier (2008) asserts that the primary driver of a social entrepreneur is collective well-being, engaging in service to society and addressing unmet market and state needs, based on economic theory. The social entrepreneur is viewed as a change agent in the Schumpeterian sense.

Furthermore, Defourny and Nyssens (2012) regard non-profit sector entrepreneurs as change stimulators, creating new services, production methods, production factors, organizational forms, or markets. This type of entrepreneurship is about results rather than mere revenue.

Asli and Slitine (2013) emphasize that social entrepreneurship values the potential for change and innovation, with the entrepreneur seen as a "change maker"—an exceptional individual motivated by changing unsatisfactory situations and capable of providing pragmatic, efficient, and sustainable solutions.

The Concept of Local Development

In a world where economic development is a fundamental concern for governments and international organizations, studying the concept of local development is considered one of the most dynamic research fields. Diop (2008) defines local development as a development theory using the concept of "territory," where "internal" is inevitably linked to "external" endogenous factors. Thus, the full utilization of previously neglected resources to help society and the population adapt to development and globalization processes is not an alternative, but moderate support.

Local development is a theoretical and practical domain at the crossroads of multiple human and social science disciplines. Boucher and Favreau (2001) emphasize that social work, sociology, planning, and economics are all concerned with local development. According to them, "local development aims to enhance a community's resources through a partnership of local actors with intervention goals on employment and economic and social revitalization." They add that this approach focuses on three main axes: developing resident population skills (socio-professional integration); actively intervening in the job market (enterprises); and supporting the reconstitution of the social fabric (associations and support groups).

The territory or local area can be seen as a coalition of actors fixed in a delimited geographic space, aiming to identify and solve productive problems, judgments, or perceptions shared by these actors (Landel and Senil, 2008). Pecqueur and Itçaina (2012) argue that local development is now a key discussion point in public policies in developing countries, generally associated with a decentralized process that is necessary but often delayed. By closely examining the ground and its achievements, one can understand the necessity of clarifying the basic principles of its functioning. Local development also entails activities aimed at improving the community's culture, economy, politics, and society through partnerships between various decision-making centers: "Local development is a global approach that mobilizes and synergizes local actors to enhance human and material resources in a given territory, in negotiated relation with the decision-making centers of the economic, social, cultural, and political entities they belong

to" (Houée and Dia, 2001).

According to Klein (2006) , local development isn't just about where it happens , it's about the impact it has on the community. If we based it solely on location, then all development would be local since everything happens somewhere. What truly makes development local is when it builds and strengthens the systems and connections within that community, making a real difference in the lives of the people there.

Role of Social Entrepreneurship in Local Development

Social entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in local development by tackling community-specific problems with creative and sustainable solutions. Social entrepreneurs aren't just focused on making money—they're driven by a mission to improve their communities. They identify local issues like education gaps, healthcare needs, or environmental concerns and develop innovative businesses to address them. By using local resources and knowledge, they create solutions that make a real difference in people's lives, enhancing the overall quality of life and fostering a sense of community. In addition to solving social problems, social entrepreneurship boosts local economies by creating jobs and promoting inclusive growth. Unlike traditional businesses that might prioritize profits above all else, social enterprises reinvest their earnings back into the community to further their mission. This helps to build local capacity, empower marginalized groups, and ensure that everyone benefits from development. Social entrepreneurs also work closely with local governments, non-profits, and other stakeholders to create a supportive environment for their initiatives. This collaborative approach makes sure that their efforts are relevant, sustainable, and have a lasting impact. Through their dedication and innovative strategies, social entrepreneurs are transforming communities and driving positive change at the local level.

This section aims to understand the relationship between social entrepreneurship and local development by answering the question: To what extent can social entrepreneurship serve as a tool for local development?

The Convergent Aspects of Social Entrepreneurship and Local Development

Social and solidarity economy enterprises view social entrepreneurship not merely as an opportunity but as the foundation of their activity and development. This is particularly true for social enterprises like cooperatives, which are primary components of social entrepreneurship. The anchoring of social entrepreneurship organizations in a given territory depends on a conformity in terms of territorialisation, characterized by the intensity and plurality of relations that social and solidarity economy organizations maintain with other actors. These relations are based on three forms of proximity: organizational, institutional, and axiological proximity. Local anchoring is also considered one of the fundamental features of cooperatives.

Most presentations of cooperatives confirm that they see themselves as expressions and reflections of a given territory. Koulytchizky (2006) highlights the emergence of local initiatives of general interest within the distinction and continuity between associations, cooperatives, and national governance. Filippi et al. (2008) have clearly demonstrated that while agricultural and food cooperatives have internationalized, they continue to play an original and fundamental role in maintaining activities in the territory.

Cooperatives can also be seen as a system based on the unity of members within the enterprise. "A cooperative is an association of persons voluntarily united to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs through a collectively owned and democratically controlled enterprise" (International Labour Organization Report, 2001).

Furthermore, cooperatives that need and seek solid capital can ensure and maintain local governance. This allows them to implement local democracy characterized by open governance and protection from foreign acquisitions, encouraging reinvestment in the local economy.

Tribak et al. (2006) believe that equality among members in cooperation guarantees determined orientations that suit the area's requirements and respond to the community's needs, as these members reflect the needs and characteristics of their territory. As long as the cooperative's goal focuses on responding to community members' needs rather than capital returns, the strategic direction will align with local realities and coordinate with the socio-economic needs of the cooperative territory. Local residents must genuinely participate in project development and management through elected officials, local investors, or associations.

It is clear that cooperative members are essential actors in local development, where cooperative interests traditionally diverge. In a cooperative, consumers are entrepreneurial investors, workers are owners, and producers are sellers. The revenues generated by the cooperative enterprise belong to all members, with the redistribution of the enterprise's added value among members ensuring they pay the price or salary. Additionally, members are rooted in a territory, influencing the results of local development gains.

Cooperatives value local skills, resources, materials, and products, calling on local suppliers and partners to better reflect the short circuit. The cooperative's results primarily aim at its future, guaranteeing its sustainability in the territory. Investment serves the economic development of the cooperative and, consequently, the local economy. Social entrepreneurship can be seen as a form of regionalization of economic activity, investment, and employment. Given that territorial anchoring, democratic functioning, and economic solidarity are main characteristics of the social and solidarity economy, this conclusion is logical. Pecqueur and Itçaina (2012) have shown that cooperatives are characterized by an active and local upward dynamic; close ties between the enterprise, the territory, and the population foster trust.

The Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship to Local Development

Cooperatives contribute to local development by creating income-generating projects, helping combat unemployment by creating and improving job opportunities in the concerned territories. The emergence of cooperatives is due to the state's and capitalist enterprises' inability to meet the majority of the population's needs, particularly in the context of globalization. Cooperatives are considered voluntary organizations, offering services to anyone willing to accept membership responsibilities. Economically, cooperatives impact verified: they provide uniform income, create jobs, and value local resources, heritage, and skills.

Cooperatives' contribution to local development includes job creation, production improvement, and enhancing the local economic and social fabric. This would not be possible without active support from major public actors, local authorities, and decentralized national services. Only through public employment service agencies, organizations, and social partners can local actors be supported in creating enterprises and integrating or employing. Cooperatives offer a complementary tool and different options to local project holders. Innovation can be an asset for cooperatives, fostering change and local development. Collective expertise in a distributed model has seen an original combination of exploration and assistance, emphasizing innovation by disrupting knowledge stability (Veyer and Sangiorgio, 2006).

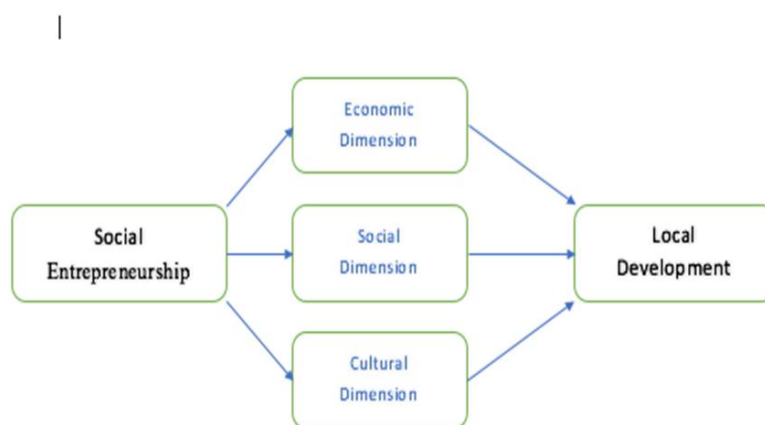
Cooperatives serve as a lever for local development in economic, social, and cultural aspects. They create income-generating activities for men and women, mitigating drought impact. However, developing these cooperatives requires good commercial knowledge while integrating local development principles. It also necessitates recognizing and integrating cooperatives as social actors in regional strategic decisions (Abdelbaki and Zammar, 2018).

Touzard and Vandame (2009) highlight the cooperatives' leadership in local development, resulting from internal development. Cooperatives need training in business management and cooperative life. This sharing complements human wealth in a specific domain. Additionally, cooperatives have a culture of networking and sharing knowledge and skills, supporting young entrepreneurs' establishment in the territory, strengthening enterprise creation, and fostering local development. Thus, there is a strong link between the cooperative and its territory. This territorial anchoring generally leads cooperatives to consider the need for long-term management of local resources affecting their activities and those of their members, participating in and investing in local development.

Asserraji (2020) studied local development construction through the local production system, identifying elements related to local development, notably its purpose. He found that surveyed enterprises consider local development's purpose to include the economic profitability of their activities and job creation opportunities to improve individuals' socio-economic status—a logical goal of any local development process. Additionally, there is a socio-economic impact of enterprises in industrial areas on the local community. Most enterprise leaders confirm their indirect contribution to promoting their anchoring territory's socio-economic status by employing young workers. Through sustaining their economic activities, entrepreneurs contribute to preserving sustainable employment and the socio-economic dynamics of their anchoring territory.

METHODOLOGY, RESEARCH MODEL, AND VARIABLE SPECIFICATION

To address our research question, we chose a quantitative method, deemed most suitable for our study, allowing us to perfectly answer our question. A hypothetical-deductive approach involves formulating hypotheses, collecting data, and testing results to validate or refute these hypotheses. This approach allows us to test and verify the three hypotheses of our research model and determine the association relationship between social entrepreneurship and local development through three dimensions: economic (activity level, turnover), social (job creation), and cultural (education, training).



Source: Authors

We formulated three hypotheses to be tested:

H.1: The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the economic dimension;

H.2: The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the social dimension;

H.3: The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the cultural dimension.

We assumed that the three dimensions—economic, social, and cultural—of social entrepreneurship, as the independent variables, explain our dependent variable, local development. This relationship mainly involves observable variables characterizing the behaviour of argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH, contributing or not to local development. We then defined the variables of our research model according to the following table:

Table 1: Definition of Research Model Variables

Variables	Definition
Social entrepreneurship	A form of entrepreneurship aiming to put economic activities at the service of humanity, aspiring to provide a sustainable response and alternative solution to various economic, social, environmental, and moral crises, and contributing to job creation by minimizing poverty and social inequalities (Drissi and Angade, 2017).
Local development	"Local development aims to enhance a community's resources through a partnership of local actors with intervention goals on employment and economic and social revitalization" (Doucet and Favreau, 2011).
Economic dimension	Expected effects on beneficiaries' well-being. The project's added value manifests as innovation advantages and improved living standards as a counterpart to investment (Louizi, 1998).
Social dimension	In terms of territorial development, the number of created jobs is significant. However, their quality, i.e., nature, status, and required qualification level, is also crucial. More qualified jobs attract or retain well-trained individuals in the region, promoting initiatives and adjustments needed by the development process (Vernières, s.d.).
Cultural dimension	A higher education and training level of the population fulfills a key condition for territorial development. Indicators like years of study and highest achieved diploma level are usual measures (Vernières, s.d.).

For the independent variables, we defined and retained the following items for each dimension;

- **Economic dimension:** The level of activity and turnover (sales revenue).
- **Social dimension:** Job creation
- **Cultural dimension:** Education and training.

Finally, we conducted the study with the 15 argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH in Taroudant province, using a questionnaire survey. The response rate was close to 100%, and the results were extrapolated to test the specified model and provide answers to the underlying questions of social entrepreneurship's contribution to local development.

RESULTS

Using linear regression, we explored the relationship between the two variables to be explained (social entrepreneurship and local development) through three explanatory variables (economic, social, and cultural dimensions). We represented each result by modelling regression coefficients and their significant hypotheses.

The regression analysis aimed to verify if there is a direct significant link between the three variables (economic, social, and cultural dimensions) and the dependent variable. The usual conditions to conclude data issues' absence were verified: the Durbin-Watson statistic is $d = 2.163$, between the critical values of $1.5 < d < 2.5$, indicating no autocorrelation in the error term. Additionally, collinearity statistics revealed no multicollinearity issues, and the VIF (variance inflation factor) did not exceed 2.787. We previously checked the data's linearity assumptions and conditions for our research model.

Table 2: R-Squared Coefficient

Model	R	R2	Adjusted R2	Estimation standard Error	Change Statistics					DurbinWatson
					Variati-on of R-2	Variation Of F	ddl1	ddl2	Sig. Variation of F	
1	,838 ^a	,702	,621	,14684	,702	8,650	3	11	,003	2,163

a. Predictors : (Constant), Cultural Dimension, Social Dimension, Economic Dimension

b. Dependent Variable: Local Development

The linear regression results show positive and significant relationships ($F(3; 11) = 8.650, p \leq 0.003$). The model quality is satisfactory, as the three independent variables explain nearly half of the variance of the dependent variable expressed in the initial data, and the R-Squared coefficient is 0.702, indicating that the explanatory variables contribute 70.2% to the dependent variable's variability. This means that the economic, social, and cultural dimensions positively influence local development.

Table 3: ANOVAa Coefficient

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	,560	3	.187	8,650	,003^b
Residual	,237	11	.022		
Total	.797	14			

a. Dependent Variable: Local Development

b. Predictors : (Constant), Cultural Dimension, Social Dimension, Economic Dimension

Source: SPSS Output

The ANOVA test assesses the model's quality by comparing the sig with the acceptable threshold of 0.05. The results indicate that the model is highly significant, as the sig value (0.003) is significantly below 0.05. To test the formulated hypotheses, we used the standardized Beta regression coefficient analysis, the student t-test, and the significance test.

The linear regression coefficient results show that the economic dimension variable positively affects the local development variable, with a standardized Beta regression coefficient of 0.532, the highest student t-test value of 1.938, and a significance level of 0.079. The results for the second variable show that the social dimension variable has a positive and significant effect on local development, with a standardized Beta regression coefficient of 0.421, a student t-test value of 2.446, and a good significance level of 0.032. The third variable reveals that the cultural dimension variable negatively affects local development, with a standardized Beta regression coefficient of 0.096, a student t-test value of 0.352, and a poor significance level of 0.731, indicating the variable's negative contribution.

Table 4: Beta Coefficient and Student t-Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Standard Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	,574	,267		2,147	,055		
	Economic dimension	,316	,163	,532	1,938	,079	,359	2,787
	Social dimension	,313	,128	,421	2,446	,032	,913	1,095
	Cultural dimension	,062	,177	,096	,352	,731	,364	2,745

a. Dependent Variable: Local Development

Source: SPSS Output

Based on the multiple regression test, the statistical test results allow us to validate hypotheses H.1 (The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the economic dimension) and H.2 (The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the social dimension). The test results for hypothesis H.3 allow us to reject the hypothesis (The argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH have a positive effect on local development via the cultural dimension).

DISCUSSION

In light of the obtained results, it appears that the surveyed argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH tend to contribute to local development through the three dimensions: economic, social, and cultural. The practices related to the economic and social dimensions strongly explain local development.

This result summarizes several conclusions. After evaluating the level of association between the three dimensions (economic, social, and cultural) and local development through linear regression and variance analysis, the regression results show positive and significant relationships ($F(3; 11) = 8.650, p \leq 0.003$) with an explained variance of 70.2% for the dependent variable's variability.

Generally, cooperatives' participation in local development involves creating income-generating projects, combating unemployment by creating and improving job opportunities in the concerned territories. They also act as economic and social catalysts through active local cooperatives responding effectively to local development requirements by safeguarding resources, maintaining employment, and improving working conditions.

The study results show that argan cooperatives significantly contribute to local development in a dual perspective: economically by participating in the informal sector eradication and partially reducing unemployment, and socially by fighting poverty and social exclusion, empowering women, and improving the population's living conditions. These results align with Dafali et al. (2015), who affirm that cooperatives' active participation reduces unemployment in the region. They create significant job opportunities within the region, helping reduce unemployment and providing members with a substantial income source, allowing them to live dignified lives and be valuable in the region's economic and social fabric. Asserraji (2020) confirms that social enterprise leaders indirectly contribute to their anchoring territory's socio-economic promotion by employing young workers. Sustaining their economic activities helps entrepreneurs preserve sustainable employment and the socio-economic dynamics of their anchoring territory. These results also align with Veyer and Sangiorgio (2006), who state that local actors in enterprise creation, integration, or employment are social partners and organizations. The cooperative offers a complementary tool and different options to local project holders. Culturally, Touzard and Vandame (2009) argue that cooperatives need business management training and cooperative member life training. This sharing complements human wealth in a specific domain. Additionally, cooperatives have a culture of networking and sharing knowledge and skills, supporting young entrepreneurs' establishment in the territory, enhancing enterprise creation, and fostering local development.

CONCLUSION

Social entrepreneurship is a true job generator and an effective means to address employment market deficits. It is a powerful key during socio-economic crises and declines. It also acts as an economic and social catalyst through active local cooperatives that effectively meet local development requirements by safeguarding resources, maintaining employment, and improving working conditions.

In conclusion, this work contributes to reinforcing the scientific and political understanding of the key role of cooperative forms of social entrepreneurship in local development. It highlights cooperatives' contributions to local society, economy, and culture. Based on a literature review, we formulated three hypotheses linking argan cooperatives subsidized by the INDH and local development through economic, social, and cultural dimensions. The rich literature allowed us to define the items for each variable and conduct various statistical tests. A quantitative method was adopted, administering a questionnaire to the 15 cooperatives studied. Using SPSS version 23, the collected data were analysed through principal component analysis and several tests (reliability, correlation, etc.), providing answers to our hypotheses. The results confirm the first two hypotheses (H1 and H2) and refute the third (H3). Economically, these entities help alleviate the informal sector and partially reduce unemployment. Socially, they are the main resource for reducing poverty and social exclusion and improving inhabitants' living conditions in their territories. Culturally, they receive business management and cooperative member life training, and knowledge and skill sharing.

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