

# Motivational Factors for Social Entrepreneurship in Morocco: A Thematic Analysis

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**Abstract:** *The study of motivation to create a social enterprise is an ongoing concern in social entrepreneurship. The purpose of this study is to better understand the motivations for creating social enterprises using a push and pull motivation framework. In Morocco, research on the social entrepreneurship phenomenon is still in its infancy. It was therefore important to add new and valuable information to the existing literature on the subject. The empirical data for the study was collected by conducting twenty semi-structured individual interviews via the google meet service or by telephone. We applied the qualitative method, so the empirical results of our research allowed us to develop a new global framework of motivation in which we provided three phases to better illustrate the relationship and role of motivations to engage in social entrepreneurship namely "pre - startup" phase, "during startup" phase, and The final phase, "post - startup"*

**Keywords:** social entrepreneur, social enterprise, social entrepreneurship, Morocco, motivation process, entrepreneurship, Pull/Push theory

## 1. Introduction

In previous studies of the business entrepreneur's motivation to enter business, authors Shapero and Sokol (1982) explained that different contexts were likely to generate different motivations. Later, Gilad and Levine (1986) considered that these motivations varied in two ways: necessity or pressure motivations and opportunity or attraction motivations. Within these two types of motivations, push factors include reactive situations, such as unemployment, dissatisfaction with current personal situation, and/or family pressure (Verheul et al., 2010) and pull factors include proactive situations, such as innovation, independence, recognition, financial success, and personal fulfillment (Carter et al., 2003).

According to McClelland (1961), the need for achievement, the need for power, and the need for affiliation each constitute the three dominant needs at the basis of human motivation. From the results of Robert's (1989) study of the motivation of the technology entrepreneur, it is also indicated that the technology entrepreneur has a moderate need for achievement, a moderate need for power, and a low need for affiliation. In the case of Professor Yunus, it is surprising to find that the push and pull motivations and needs discussed by previous researchers appear little or not at all in social entrepreneurs. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that there are other fundamental motivational differences between business entrepreneurs (motivated by money) and social entrepreneurs (motivated by their mission).

This study is devoted to the motivating factors for social entrepreneurship in Morocco. The creation of a social enterprise represents a key area of research in entrepreneurship and remains a little explored topic. Despite the fact that it is relatively unknown, its origins go far back in the history of entrepreneurship research.

In some countries, research on social entrepreneurship is already well established. In Morocco, despite the fact that interest in social entrepreneurship is growing. Entrepreneurial initiatives are multiplying, the legal framework is undergoing a remarkable evolution to support the specificities of these organizations (a draft framework law on the social and solidarity economy, developed in 2016 and currently being validated) (Khasal, 2018); except that research on social entrepreneurship is still in its infancy.

Research on motivation also goes back a long way, and is primarily concerned with the motivations of individuals. Thus, the motivation of the social entrepreneur differs from the underlying motivations associated with the traditional construct of commercial entrepreneurship. This is where research can depart from existing commercial entrepreneurship theory. Research on societal and institutional motivation is a less studied topic. In this research, motivation in general and entrepreneurial motivation are analyzed from an individual and societal perspective.

Problem: Research on entrepreneurial motivation has moved away from the traditional view that economic aspirations are the primary motivation for new business creation. Recently, it has become clear that there may be other, more relevant motives for entrepreneurs to start and operate a business. In the case of social entrepreneurs, social gains and values are considered to be the main motivating factors for the social entrepreneur (Carsrud & Brännback 2011). Yet, research on motivation is extremely rare in the social entrepreneurship literature. By conducting research on social motivation, we can better understand social entrepreneurs and perhaps their decision to start a social enterprise rather than a business venture.

Although social enterprise and social entrepreneurship have been developed and studied for more than 40 years, they are still the subject of relatively limited exploration in the

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academic field. In particular, studies devoted to the motivations of entrepreneurs for social entrepreneurship. The main objective of this study is to identify the main motivations for entrepreneurship among Moroccan social entrepreneurs, and to find similarities and differences in these motivational factors between business and social entrepreneurs, thus paving the way for future empirical studies. Previous research does not provide a clear answer to this question. Therefore, it is important to conduct a current and relevant study. Our goal is to fill this knowledge gap by interviewing Moroccan social entrepreneurs. The interviews will provide valuable information about the motivations of social entrepreneurs and thus offer insight into how individuals are motivated to create social enterprises.

This study addresses the gap in the literature related to why social entrepreneurs are motivated to address a societal need. This study will analyze the relationship between social entrepreneurs' experience with a problem and their decision to include solving a social problem in their business model. This paper focuses on the following objective: Identifying the main motivating factors of social entrepreneurs in the Moroccan context, distinguishing between the push and pull factors of social entrepreneurs, and understanding the why and how of the motivations of Moroccan social entrepreneurs.

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study and achieve its objectives, the main research question is: "How, in a Moroccan context, do motivations manifest themselves among social entrepreneurs?"

This main research question is supported by sub - questions: Why did social entrepreneurs decide to start?

How are they prompted or attracted to social entrepreneurship?

Research interest: Various studies in this area have shed light on the question of what social entrepreneurship is and whether or not it should be considered a whole new field of research. Although many researchers have defined social entrepreneurship individually, a common definition is lacking. This study intends to present the various ways of looking at social entrepreneurship, analyze the economic climate of social entrepreneurship and discover the main motivations for becoming a social entrepreneur. This study is intended for anyone interested in social enterprises, social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial motivations.

The significance of this research paper is considerable. The literature on social entrepreneurship has somehow neglected to highlight the weight of entrepreneurial motivations in the choice of entrepreneurial direction as well as in daily activities. This work adds interesting information to social entrepreneurship research through a fresh view of the topic. In addition, this research proposes a new approach to research on societal and institutional motivation, which has so far been ignored by research on individual motivation. New information on these topics enriches the existing literature on social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial motivation. This knowledge may prove useful in understanding how people choose different entrepreneurial

orientations and in particular the social orientation. In addition, another impact lies in the ability to know how to motivate social entrepreneurs and advance their activities.

This study is relevant given the gaps in the literature regarding the motivations of social entrepreneurs and how this information can contribute to the existing literature devoted to the field. Understanding the motivations of social entrepreneurs will contribute to a better understanding of the field and help define it.

Research specific to social entrepreneurs indicates that meeting a societal need discovered through personal experience or volunteer work (antecedents), for example, is the primary motivator for the entrepreneur. Research in the business literature suggests that business entrepreneurs are motivated by profit. The interest of this study is to investigate the true motivations of social entrepreneurs.

Methodology: This investigation is based on the literature on motivation and social entrepreneurship and is supported by empirical data. It employed a qualitative research design using a semi - structured interview approach. Rudenstam and Newton (2007) define qualitative research as understanding experiences from the perspective of participants. The research design consisted of a study interviewing Moroccan social entrepreneurs about their projects.

Twenty - five questions were formulated to better understand their motivations and how these diverge from the traditional entrepreneurial profit motive. Twenty participants were interviewed. The research method included twenty structured interviews involving individuals identified as social entrepreneurs based on the definitional parameters established in this study. The definitional parameters are discussed in the following chapters. Sample selection criteria, as well as specific interview questions, can be found in the methodology section and related appendices.

Social entrepreneurship is still a relatively new research topic, which means that the literature on it is scarce. This knowledge gap necessitated a qualitative study. We applied the qualitative method and the case study method to conduct our research in the thesis. This research method allowed us to gather new information and look at the topic from a new perspective.

This study employed a qualitative research design using a semi - structured interview approach.

## 2. Thematic Content Analysis: Data Interpretation

At the level of the thematic analysis approach, an "in - context" categorization is based on the coder's qualities. Coders are thus called upon to choose from among the various possible socio - semantic affiliations of a word (Bernard Fallery, Florence Rodhain, 2013), the one that is closest to the meaning of this word in context. Coding does not simply consist of applying a word - label to an extract of material (Ayache and Dumez, 2011), as each unit of meaning refers to several categories of nouns. This requires knowledge of the theoretical implications of the category

system, but a back - and - forth dynamic allows for the detection of regularities in decisions that were not anticipated and for the detection of inconsistencies in the application of the grid (Point and Voynnet Fourboul, 2006). Recall that the objective of this study is to try to better understand the motivations of social entrepreneurs who have

decided to create a social enterprise. In what follows, we will make a thematic analysis of the concepts according to the three phases that make up the interview guide.

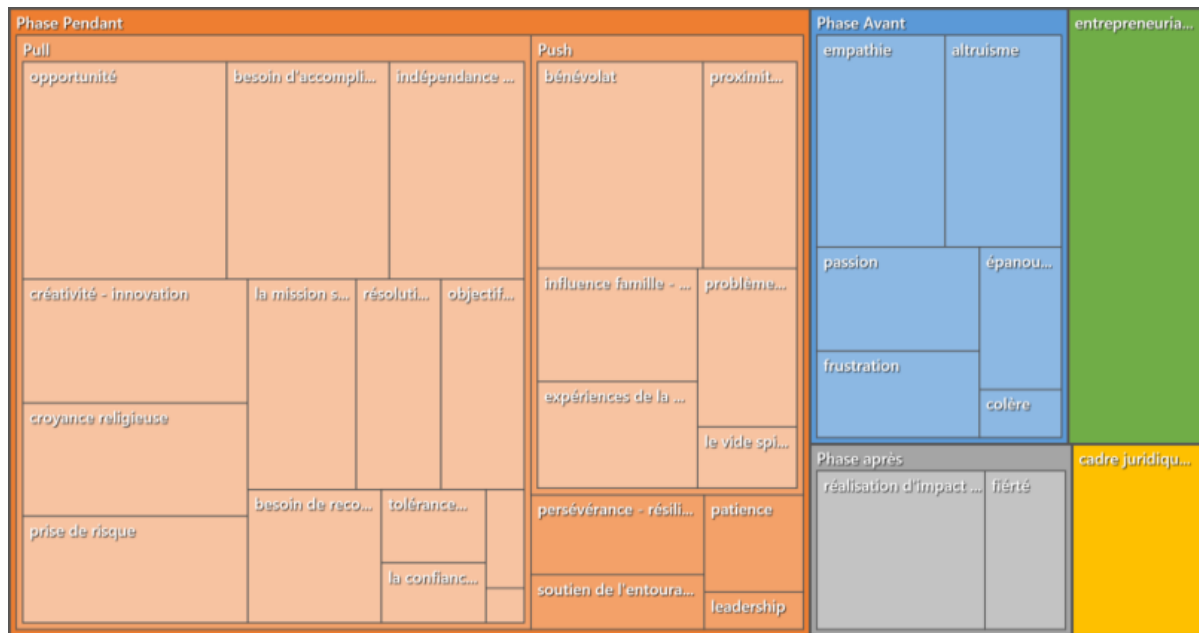


Figure 1: Graph of the hierarchy of categories created

We present the created categories in a hierarchical graph that shows the data in nested rectangles of different sizes. The size refers to the amount of coded references in that category, the more coded references, the larger the rectangle size. The hierarchy graph shows a larger rectangle at the top left, while a smaller area is shown towards the bottom right.

We chose the hierarchical graph in NVIVO 12 because we want to show an overview of the data, with the different levels of data hierarchies. The graph provides a clearer visualization of the coded categories and subcategories in a single view, which allows for a better comparison of relative sizes. Indeed, it is easier to analyze rectangles than curved surfaces, so this graph gives us the possibility to know the coverage rate of the codes.

In this paragraph we will focus on the determinants of motivation of social entrepreneurs mentioned in the theoretical part and which were the object of our categories during the processing of the data through the Nvivo12 software, targeting those most mentioned in the case of Moroccan social entrepreneurs.

The main objective of this study is to identify the main motivations of the social entrepreneur. From the data, by categorizing the themes according to the three phases pre - startup, during startup and post - startup with the push/pull motivation framework, we find a total of 37 motivational themes but we will only analyze the most cited ones. In our results, we find not only themes that correspond to existing findings but also themes unique to the social entrepreneur. We draw on the rich literature in psychology and entrepreneurship to situate the visible outcome data from the study. First, we define concepts that were not identified in the literature review and discuss how they have been

understood in previous studies of social enterprise and entrepreneurship. Next, we discuss the unique aspects of each construct, using direct quotes from social entrepreneurs to clarify and enrich the findings. These themes are described in a separate section below and accompanied by supporting data.

**Pre - startup phase:**

**Altruism:** Altruism is defined as the willingness to work for the well - being of society and the concern to make others happy. Altruism is a primary motivating factor for social entrepreneurs, as many studies prove, so finding this factor among our results seems to be a no - brainer. The social entrepreneurs surveyed indicate that they help others without anticipating external rewards. The information given by social entrepreneurs reflects their need and willingness to care for, encourage, and foster the development of others. *Social Entrepreneurs 19: "I hope to have the opportunity to help others throughout my life, it is my source of happiness, when I help others I feel very happy. "*

*Social Entrepreneurs 5: " That willingness to help others is innate, I think, because I can't imagine someone who doesn't have that willingness being comfortable working in social entrepreneurship, it's going to be very difficult for them and they might even give up later on. "*

**Empathy:** In the theory presented by Miller et al, (2012), they suggest that compassion, which consists of empathy and sympathy, is a key motivation for social entrepreneurs. Consistent with their findings, and according to our results, compassion, or more specifically empathy, played a very important role in our participants' startup journey. Germark

et al., (2014), state that compassion is manifested in the terms "helping others" and "closeness to the problem." Most of the social entrepreneurs interviewed indicated that empathy is a trigger in the social entrepreneurship process, there are those who felt that without empathy a social entrepreneur will not continue.

Empathy and sympathy seem to reflect the type of emotional connection that social entrepreneurs feel toward their target communities, either as sympathetic observers or also by being an integral part of the target population. We believe that empathy is an essential motivating factor for all social entrepreneurs, without which they will never devote the time, energy and money to what they do.

*Social Entrepreneur 12: "Indeed, I think that to have better results you have to have a connection with the project or the mission, and this connection is created through the emotional connection, because finally the contact with the people who suffer from this problem influenced you to find a solution and so it's empathy, I think that the feelings in the social mission are the driving force, without feelings there will be no innovation and motivation"*

**Self - actualization:** According to Maslow's theory (1943), self - actualization is a motivating factor in the workplace. For the social entrepreneurs in this study, their experience in the public and/or social sector prompted them to seek to fulfill the need for personal fulfillment that the field of social entrepreneurship offers.

It is clear that social entrepreneurs have a strong desire to create their social enterprise, either because it is a passionate desire that will bring fulfillment, or because of an overriding need that will become fulfillment by realizing it and achieving the goal of the social enterprise.

*Social Entrepreneur 13: "I'm not a person who doesn't like routine, so in what I do, I find satisfaction and personal fulfillment."*

*"Another thing is motivation, social entrepreneurs are more fulfilled in life because they create impact."*

**Frustration:** This activity has attracted some social entrepreneurs who have seen it as a way to address a source of frustration. In a professional context, frustration refers to feelings of stress, irritation and dissatisfaction (Hart and Staveland, 1988) associated with constraints in achieving important goals (Peters and O'Connor, 1980).

A tendency toward negative affective experiences among entrepreneurs limits the scope of set goals and increases the likelihood of dissatisfaction with outcomes. (Delgado - Garcia, Rodriguez - Escudero, & Martin - Cruz, 2012). The results of this study showed that social entrepreneurs were driven to create their business as a way to reduce a source of frustration.

*Social Entrepreneurs 17 "The first feeling will be frustration, feeling frustrated that we're still ensuring that balance towards the end of the year when we take stock of our activities and making sure that we have that balance is*

*interesting, it's a concern. The fact that we think that even though we don't have social enterprise status, we've created that balance between social impact and profile."*

*Social Entrepreneurs 2 "Yes, as I said, I work in Casablanca and I used to come 4 or 5 times a year to my region, and as I saw the state of this region deteriorating little by little, I found that we, the youth, are responsible for finding solutions for this region."*

**Passion:** Passion is feeling drawn to an activity that one loves, finds important, and chooses to engage in (Vallerand et al., 2003). Entrepreneurial passion involves similar intense positive emotions to engage in meaningful entrepreneurial activities and is associated with increased motivation (Cardon et al., 2009). In our study, social entrepreneurs mentioned being passionate about mission and social impact to choose social entrepreneurship, others used the word "happiness," "joy," and "love" to explain why they were doing things the way they were.

*Social Entrepreneur 13 "After a while, I discovered social entrepreneurship and I immediately knew it was the right fit for me because it fulfilled both my passion for creating lasting social impact and my desire to do business."*

*"I will say the joy and happiness of waking up every morning and knowing that I am working in the field that I am most interested in, it is a passion for me."*

**Phase during startup:**

**Pull factors:**

**Need for accomplishment/realization:** In our study, the factor "need for accomplishment" and "realization" is very significant among all the motivating factors, as they speak about their desire to challenge themselves and find solutions to social problems. This factor is part of the selfish factors of the social entrepreneur, except that here the social mission and the result of the social impact are the ones that give them a sense of accomplishment and realization.

This result is consistent with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, McClelland's (1961) theory of human motivation, and many findings from previous studies of entrepreneurial motivation (Carter et al., 2003; Germak et al., 2014). Although success as an entrepreneurial motivation is not surprising, as success has long been associated with entrepreneurial career choices (Collins, Hanges, & Locke, 2004; McClelland, 1965, Shane, Locke, & Collins, 2003), the focus of the pursuit of success differs, for social entrepreneurs, with success appearing to focus on creative processes that solve entrenched societal problems. We can deduce that all entrepreneurs are motivated by the need for fulfillment, which comes mostly after the achievement of purely social goals.

*Social Entrepreneurs 3 "We would say personal fulfillment Because in this project, I find meaning in my daily work, my work has meaning, it touches children and it touches families and so it has meaning compared to another job*

*Where you feel when you're doing an executive job And that doesn't necessarily touch the human aspect. "*

**Creativity/ innovation:** In this study, we found that social entrepreneurs are innovators. They create new products and services, delivery processes, and business models to solve intractable social problems. Innovation is an important criterion for social entrepreneurs in choosing the type of product or service they will sell. It is a key to success, involving both entrepreneurial talent and social goals (Ghalwash et al., 2017).

Our respondents showed that they had launched new ideas in the Moroccan context, which they said did not exist on the ground before they started their social enterprises. Drayton (2002, p.123) described social entrepreneurs as creative people with a "powerful new idea that changes the system" in the tradition of Shumpeter (1951) and Drucker (1985).

However, social entrepreneurs use their new ideas to achieve social benefit. Common themes highlighted in most definitions of social entrepreneurs in the existing literature on social entrepreneurship include innovation and creativity as key personality characteristics.

*Social Entrepreneur 12 "Yes, definitely, and the innovations and patents we've gotten prove that innovation is part of our motivation. And then you have to be creative, especially for a social entrepreneur who is dealing with sensitive social issues, so it takes a lot of creativity to get real results. "*

**Religious Belief:** Religious beliefs connect people and sometimes guide their moral values and conduct. Religious beliefs can influence individual actions, especially in a country like MOROCCO where religion is considered very important and individuals often have strong religious convictions.

We found in our study a set of social entrepreneurs who were passionate about their religious belief until they became involved in a social enterprise to fulfill that passion. The majority of entrepreneurs with this belief indicate that it is part of what they learned at home, in school, or even in society. Doing good and seeking to help others has become a given, not a choice. We can deduce that this religious belief is the key to why the social entrepreneur wants to start a business.

*Social Entrepreneur 1 "Our religion is the basis, it asks us to help others. And it is also in our DNA, we Moroccans, it is part of our culture and education. It has always existed in our country. For example, during Ramadan, we have the habit of doing good and helping others. We can say that this is also part of social entrepreneurship, it is part of our habits. So we are in a society where we are used to helping each other. "*

*Social Entrepreneurs 6 "It's the driving force, it's the foundation, it's the reason why I decided to take this path. I can say that my main motivation is actually my religion. I have religious goals that are much more important than social impact and money. "*

**Independence and autonomy:** The need for independence and autonomy is one of the most common pull factors reported in previous studies (Shane et al., 1991; Carter et al., 2003; Kirkwood, 2009). Based on our study, when discussing social entrepreneur motivation, we place a lot of emphasis on the altruistic part, such as social mission and compassion. In contrast, we found that among the motivations of a number of social entrepreneurs, the selfish part, namely independence and autonomy.

On the other hand, this need for independence is not present in all social entrepreneurs, there are those who are salaried employees and who are satisfied with their status, so they do not seek to create a social enterprise to meet this need that they do not express, but to meet a societal need.

Other categories of social entrepreneurs indicated that, for them, independence and autonomy are important, especially in decision - making, because in a social enterprise, mission is more important than wealth creation and, therefore, this autonomy will allow them to make decisions without hesitation. Our results suggest that the autonomy of social entrepreneurs extends to both the choice of how to live one's life and the social impact one values.

*Social Entrepreneur 10 "Independence is important, whether it's financial, physical, geographical, in terms of time or otherwise, but it's not a motivation for me to start the social enterprise. "*

*Social Entrepreneur 11 "The social entrepreneur starts by solving a problem, so independence and autonomy are a consequence. "*

**Social mission:** Vigilance occurs when individuals identify opportunities that have been neglected without actively seeking them (Kirzner, 1979). The discovery of such an opportunity may be triggered by knowledge and/or experience or even in response to the resolution of certain social errors and deficiencies.

Without exception, all social entrepreneurs stated that social mission is a primary motivating factor that encourages individuals to engage in social entrepreneurship as a duty, not a choice. The social entrepreneurs interviewed were well aware of social problems and made it their mission to solve them without the help of the government or their close counterparts, and their mission is to make others overcome their difficulties. Social entrepreneurs even indicated that among the indicators that differentiate them from traditional entrepreneurs is the social mission.

*Social Entrepreneur 6: "So let's start with the social mission which is my main motivation for launching my startup, so it's an ultimate motivation. It's of course the social mission, it's the driving force of social entrepreneurs, it's what identifies us and differentiates us, it's our reason for becoming a social entrepreneur and not another one. "*

**Non - monetary objective:** The social entrepreneurs in our study chose to create their enterprise not for money but for other purely social purposes. This is therefore the opposite

of the logic of business creation of commercial entrepreneurs.

The creation of a social enterprise has been a well decided choice, our entrepreneurs confirm the fact that they know that in a social enterprise you cannot create wealth and therefore they assume perfectly this choice. Their non - monetary motivation is their primary motivation.

*Social Entrepreneur 11 "Our mission is to find innovative and entrepreneurial solutions for every social challenge in Morocco, in order to have a world where ideas and innovation opportunities are at the service of the common good. So at the beginning, it was not a necessity in the sense of providing an income through social entrepreneurship, but rather choosing to run a structure that did not exist at the time. "*

**Risk - taking:** The Moroccan social entrepreneurs in our study were identified as risk - takers. In developing countries such as Morocco, risks are greater and more varied, especially in the social sector.

Mort et al (2002), Tan et al (2005), and Litzky et al (2010) describe social entrepreneurship as proactive and risky. The social entrepreneurs in our study are risk takers because they have vigilantly noticed the associated risks and yet they decide to take that risk and solve the problems that have been detected without waiting for government intervention or private sector assistance.

*Social Entrepreneur 12 "For me, risk taking is an essential personality trait that every social entrepreneur should have, less risk means less innovation. "*

*Social Entrepreneur 15 "Generally in entrepreneurship without risk taking you will not be able to see success in new things, and therefore you will never be able to succeed in entrepreneurship, I know friends who can't leave their salaried position because for them they can't take risks, they can't leave their comfort zone. "*

**Problem solving:** Solving an existing problem in society is one of the motivating factors for social entrepreneurs. Not surprisingly, those interested in social entrepreneurship have a strong desire to help society, which motivates them to engage in social entrepreneurship.

Much of the literature on motivation in the public and social sector addresses this as an important motivating factor in this field. Commitment to the public interest is a key element of social entrepreneurship. Interviewees indicated that they chose social entrepreneurship primarily to solve a problem they experienced and wanted to help others overcome, or they detected a problem in society and decided to solve it.

*Social Entrepreneur 11 "It's the obsession with solving a problem, it's a particular personality trait of the social entrepreneur. Problem solving is the main motivator, it's the obsession of social entrepreneurs, all these entrepreneurs all over the world detect a problem and fight to solve it. "*

*"it's solving social problems, for example, there are people who confuse things and think that unemployment and employment are social problems, so for these people, you have to create a business to address this problem, in this case, is mcdonald's that creates jobs a social enterprise? The answer is no, the main objective of mcdonald's is not to create jobs, but to create wealth to summarize, a social entrepreneur is a person who identifies a social need, then develops a solution and then turns it into a business. "*

#### **Push Factors:**

**Volunteerism:** Volunteerism associated with one's values and worth is also one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for volunteering by the social entrepreneurs in this study. A large majority of social entrepreneurs valued their experience with volunteering, community service, and extracurricular activities. They confirmed that as a result of these experiences, their behavior and outlook has changed. They believe that without this experience, they will not know the importance of social entrepreneurship and how people can meet the needs of society using the economy. Volunteering became a major motivating factor that influenced them to create a social enterprise so that this time their solutions would be sustainable and more effective.

*Social Entrepreneurs 11 "I started social entrepreneurship during my years of study at ENCG Settat by joining the Enactus program in its first version in Morocco in 2005, which was then called student in free enterprises. It is an international non - governmental organization that works in the field of student social entrepreneurship and sustainable development. The objective of this activity at the time was to help people improve their living conditions through an economic system and not to help them through a classic donation system. This experience opened my eyes to the possibilities that existed and how economic action could help improve people's lives. "*

**Life experience:** Many innovators and artists are inspired by their life experiences to design their work. As for our social entrepreneurs, most of them are more or less inspired by their previous life experiences. For example, we found a social entrepreneur who was inspired by an encounter with a prominent personality in the world of social entrepreneurship and other authors were inspired by their patents of inventions, by an experience in their childhood, etc. We can say that these social entrepreneurs were inspired in this way by an innovative idea or by the discovery of a truth concerning a subject. All their life experiences not only form the basis for the creation of their business, but also change their lives.

*Social entrepreneurs 8 "So, to come back to society, sometimes the state tries to find solutions that will help young people for example, but sometimes they are not effective, sometimes they are even complicated. When you enter the world of social entrepreneurship, you first learn to take the initiative and to create your own solution to the social problem you have detected without waiting for the help of institutions for example. Social entrepreneurship gives you the courage to face obstacles. "*

**Influence of the entourage:** The influence of the entourage on the decision to become an entrepreneur is a motivating factor that took less importance among our social entrepreneurs, the majority of them confirmed that they were not influenced by anyone. For the others, they say that they were either influenced by the experiences of their parents or their friends who encouraged them to take this path of entrepreneurship that responds to both their passion for the social issue.

Social entrepreneurs are sometimes influenced by the success of those around them or even sometimes the negative experiences of their family in entrepreneurship have pushed them into entrepreneurship to do things differently

*Social Entrepreneur 13 "Doing business was also important to me, my father was a businessman, but unfortunately he went bankrupt, and I always wanted to answer the question why we lost everything, I always wanted to understand why by doing business. That's why I got interested in social entrepreneurship. Next to that, there was also my aunt who successfully started her own business, she was my role model, I'm very proud of her. "*

**Spiritual emptiness:** Spiritual emptiness is something that was not mentioned much by all the social entrepreneurs in our study. We found that social entrepreneurs do not have much desire for a material life. Unlike classical entrepreneurs whose dissatisfaction in life is mainly due to unfulfilled material desires. Social entrepreneurs 7 and 12 mentioned that they had a job with a very good salary but were not satisfied with their lifestyle.

*Social Entrepreneur 13 "So, as a consultant, I didn't find myself in that job, I wasn't fulfilled, I saw that I was creating economic value for myself and yet I was demotivated, "*

*"No, not really, at the time I chose social entrepreneurship, I had a job, but I was not satisfied, I was supposedly lost, "*  
*Social Entrepreneurs 18 "It was a choice, I worked in the private sector with a very good salary but I was not 100% satisfied. "*

**Problem in society/social justice:** Solving an existing problem in society or seeking social justice appears to be a motivation for social entrepreneurs. Social justice is similar to other motivational concepts, including idealism, working for the betterment of society (Reiss, 2004), and seeking a better environment (Kasser & Ryan, 1993), social justice is not discussed in depth in the business entrepreneurship literature. Social entrepreneurs are seen as seeking equitable access to opportunities and resources for disadvantaged segments (Martin and Osberg, 2007; Thake and Zadek, 1997).

*Social Entrepreneur 11 "Because I understood how important it is to create social value and something useful, and in Morocco, there was this need to create a structure and a viable economic model capable of meeting the main objective of creating a social impact using the economy. so it was necessary to have a structure to do activities, for me it was a need. i had noticed that the creation of these*

*structures was becoming a global movement because they have become the vehicle for transformation. "*

*Social Entrepreneurs 18 "It was a choice, I worked in the private sector with a very good salary but I was not 100% satisfied. "*

**Proximity to social problem:** Among the motivating factors that emerged from the data, participants' proximity to certain social issues or causes, or to their work in social entrepreneurship in general, motivated them to engage in social entrepreneurship. These findings align with much of the previous empirical work (Perry & Wise, 1990; Perry, 1996, 1997; Hsieh et al., 2011), which explains how public sector workers are drawn to their work because of a deep-seated compassion or proximity to the missions or causes supported by their organizations.

In some contexts, this motivational component may have greater resonance (Wong & Tang, 2007). In the case of our study, some entrepreneurs came from economically disadvantaged areas, or from a population with a specific problem, etc., these are contexts that may have influenced this motivational component.

*Social Entrepreneurs 7 "Yes, I too belong to a poor family like most Moroccan families, my parents could not afford good schools and sometimes not even the supplies, and at the time I was lucky to have a lot of help from several French and European associations that offered us food, school bags with school supplies, clothes, candies, chocolates and others. When I had my baccalaureate, I participated in parallel to my studies in surveys with the World Bank, the Central Bank and other state institutions, and all these surveys were related to the field of education in the rural world at the national level, these experiences also allowed me to have a clear idea about my project and the solution that I proposed. So these gaps from the beginning I experienced them and then my experiences allowed me to know them better. The result that I deduced is that we should not only look for financial benefits, but also for social impact, otherwise our country will never be able to move forward and there will always be an imbalance that hinders development.*

**Other factors:**

**Patience:** The results of this study highlighted patience as a motivating factor for social entrepreneurs. Phills et al. (2008) argue that persistence is a common trait of effective social entrepreneurs, although the lack of empirical data makes it difficult to assess the extent to which this personal characteristic impedes achievement of scale.

Patience and persistence give social entrepreneurs enough energy to keep doing social entrepreneurship while remaining positive (Omoredé, 2014).

*Social entrepreneurs 13 "And it should be mentioned that the impact takes time to create, so you have to be patient. After the moral and emotional pressure, because social entrepreneurs absorb a lot of emotions from others or rather from their targets and sometimes it becomes heavy and it can create depressions. And the fact that social*

*entrepreneurship is very difficult in Morocco, so in addition to the difficulty of the work, you have a whole ecosystem that puts obstacles in your way.*

**Perseverance/resilience:** The social entrepreneurs involved demonstrate perseverance and resilience and are able to overcome adversity, such as bureaucracy and lack of government support.

The results showed that entrepreneurs persist despite the challenges they face. They even added that to succeed in social entrepreneurship, one must be persistent and resilient. In the Moroccan context, which still lacks a legal framework for social entrepreneurship, the risk rate is too high, so without the persistence of the founders, such an enterprise will not be able to overcome the obstacles and challenges.

*Social entrepreneur 17 "Perseverance or resilience because success is relative, success for a social entrepreneur is not like the notion of success for a classic entrepreneur, for a social entrepreneur success is to reach the maximum of his target or beneficiary, therefore linked to the social aspect. And the resilience not to give up, especially for a social entrepreneur, you have to hang on and continue whatever the internal or external situation. As I said before, you have to be resilient and persistent, because you have to adapt to the situation, you have to look for solutions, there are many difficult moments where resilience and perseverance are necessary. "*

**Supportive environment:** Emotional and physical support is essential for reinforcing human behavior, especially in the face of stressful transitions (Suitor, 1990). The entrepreneurs interviewed received encouragement, support, and strength from their spouses, children, parents, and close friends.

*Social Entrepreneurs 14 "The network that supports us at every obstacle and every challenge, and once again, the social impact we get motivates us to give even more, we don't want to stop, and the families help us a lot and support us along the way. "*

*Social Entrepreneurs 17 "I think it's our surroundings, family, close friends when we find ourselves facing obstacles and we already find the ear that listens without giving judgment and they feel compassion I find that these are important elements that help to overcome the moments of doubt in the most fluid way. "*

#### Post - Startup Phase:

**Pride:** Emotions play an important role in the entrepreneurial process, particularly in maintaining the momentum of an enterprise (Austin et al., 2006; Spear, 2006). For the social entrepreneurs in our study, achieving one of their primary goals of maximizing social welfare and contributing societal value brought them pride.

Emotional commitment to improving social welfare and contributing to social values is characteristic of entrepreneurs who ensure that their business is constantly growing.

Our study highlighted how social entrepreneurs' increased commitment to social goals established their dedication to the progress and success of the business. Their emotional investment in the enterprise contributed to its success, which in turn contributed to other emotional investments and commitments.

Social Entrepreneur 15 "First of all happiness and pride, although we go through a lot of obstacles, but the results give us enormous happiness and pride and I am talking about non - pecuniary results. Especially when we give everything that can help the other, then we receive a great reward from God. When you give, you receive, that is the rule. In entrepreneurship, everyone must come out a winner, and in social entrepreneurship, you come out a winner especially by the impact you achieve. . . "

*Social Entrepreneurs 16 "I can tell you that it's a feeling of pride, the fact that I didn't think only about myself, I already have my career, I work in a multinational company in the United States with a very good salary and yet I decided to work on this project and to take my time and my weekends to help students who are like me so that they too can succeed in getting into great schools and then why not work in great companies. So it's a source of pride to create a whole ecosystem of solidarity and sharing between students, "*

**Social Impact Achievement:** All social entrepreneurs have expressed feelings of joy, happiness, inner satisfaction, fulfillment, and excitement, among other positive feelings, about their successes to date. Creating social impact has become an outcome and motivation to continue giving more and having more beneficiaries. This positive feedback supports and strengthens them to create more sustainable social values.

*Social entrepreneurs 16 "I think we share the same vision of business, because the social entrepreneur also wants to earn money to develop the social impact. But I think the only difference is that the classic entrepreneur, if he doesn't see a real profitability in the project, he won't be able to continue, while on the contrary, the social entrepreneur, even if he doesn't make a lot of money but he creates a significant impact, he will be motivated to continue. "*

*Social Entrepreneurs 17 "The social entrepreneur is also not looking to live in luxury, his main concern is the social impact to be created. "*

### 3. Discussion

This study provides an in - depth understanding of what motivates individuals to engage and persist in social entrepreneurship in a developing country like Morocco. Based on our qualitative data, we propose a new comprehensive framework that we have illustrated in the figure below to explain the motivational process of individuals who decide to engage in social entrepreneurship. Broadly speaking, in our model, we suggest three phases of motivation, the pre - startup phase of the social enterprise, the phase during startup, and the post - startup phase.



**Pre - start - up phase:** The motivational factors identified in this phase are five in number, namely altruism, empathy, self - fulfillment, frustration and passion. We believe that these are very important motivational triggers in the social engagement process.

Miller et al (2012) and Ruskin, Seymour, and Webster (2016) found five emotional antecedents: compassion, passion, frustration, sympathy, and empathy. Therefore, the results were unexpected and suggest that there are more emotions involved in startup motivation. We add in this start - up phase, altruism and self - actualization.

Altruism is the most cited factor for all entrepreneurs, and while sustainability of projects is a concern for all social entrepreneurs, profit for personal gain is not a goal for any of the elements. Passion also figures prominently in what social entrepreneurs say, and there is a willingness to do things differently, believing that this innovation can bring benefits to projects.

All of the social entrepreneurs, had a high degree and started their social enterprise at an older age. This could be related to Maslow's theory of self - actualization (Maslow, 1977). This means that the individuals met four of their needs in the hierarchy and were able to focus on the highest of them, such as living a fulfilling life by working meaningfully as a social entrepreneur.

In our data, compassion is manifested in the themes of "helping society" and "proximity to the social problem." However, we found that motivation for social entrepreneurship contains more than compassion for the problems of others and a desire to help society; it is the multifaceted mix of motivational components that leads us to suggest that motivation for social entrepreneurship is a new and emerging theoretical construct, distinct from motivation for entrepreneurship or motivation for work in the public - social sector, and deserves further theoretical and empirical attention. This mixed motivation for social entrepreneurship includes components of personal fulfillment, a desire to help society, an interest in things other than money, a need for accomplishment, and a proximity to the social problem at hand.

**Start - up phase:** This phase consists of pull factors, push factors and other complementary factors that influence the decisions of social entrepreneurs.

**Pull factors:** The results are partly consistent with previous studies on the characteristics of social entrepreneurship, i. e., the need for fulfillment, independence, proportion of risk - taking and innovation are similar to those of traditional entrepreneurs.

To engage in social entrepreneurship rather than traditional social work, the social entrepreneur would have to have a motivation that includes some level of success orientation, in addition to a desire to help society. Similar logic could be used to explain why successful business entrepreneurs are often not attracted to social entrepreneurship and what would be required for them to leave their field to engage in social entrepreneurship.

The desire to have independence and autonomy is also a relevant factor for most entrepreneurs, it can bring many advantages, especially in terms of more or less risky decisions compared to traditional companies.

**Push Factors:** From an early age, social entrepreneurs developed an awareness of social injustice. This finding on social consciousness was also supported by Yitshaki and Kropp (2015).

We find the influence of role models in the social entrepreneurs' entourage, that is, the fact that these social entrepreneurs have someone in the family or peer group involved in some kind of socio - entrepreneurial initiative, or classical entrepreneurship, serving as a role model that is a factor that influences their motivation to join social entrepreneurship. This can also be affirmed in the practice of volunteering, where the transmission of values and the experience of the interviewees in these actions influenced the motivation to create their project.

In addition, the motivations could also be related to their personal experiences with a specific problem and greater self - awareness that gave them the self - confidence to follow their calling and contribute to the world in a meaningful way.

The results of this study indicate that social awareness developed earlier in childhood and adulthood. This corroborates previous research on opportunity recognition. Prior experiences and knowledge have been found to have an increased effect on awareness of opportunity recognition (Yitshaki & Kropp, 2015). In this case, it is about recognizing the social issue and offering a solution to this demand. Thus, these results show the importance of experiences and knowledge in social need recognition (Bornstein & Davis, 2010).

**Other Complementary Factors:** Social entrepreneurs were influenced by their community, such as spouses, close family, and friends, in their values and as emotional support, which confirms Omoredede's (2014) model on why social entrepreneurs persist in the entrepreneurial process.

Patience and perseverance are two motivating factors that help entrepreneurs to persevere. According to the results, these are important elements that every individual should possess to succeed in social entrepreneurship.

**Post - Startup Phase:** This phase consists of two motivating factors that are both motivations and outcomes that encourage social entrepreneurs to continue to have more social impact.

Addressing social issues in a different way and acquiring business skills during their careers supports Shumate et al. 's (2014) theory of opportunity recognition and new venture creation. In addition, Bornstein and Davis' (2010) findings on different career experiences leading to social entrepreneurship were confirmed. Emotions play an important role in the entrepreneurial process, especially in maintaining the momentum of a business (Austin et al., 2006; Spear, 2006). For the social entrepreneurs in our

study, achieving one of their primary goals of maximizing social welfare and contributing societal value brought them pride.

With respect to the push and pull dimensions, we find that the model can explain the motivation of social entrepreneurs. However, it should be viewed as a push/pull continuum, that is, without exclusive choices. Social entrepreneurs are primarily motivated by non-economic factors. Therefore, if there is an exclusive choice, the model cannot explain their motivation. However, if entrepreneurs are allowed to combine factors beyond the push/pull dichotomy, the model fits perfectly. Our results are consistent with previous studies (Gabarret and Vedel, 2015; Hughes, 2003; Kirkwood, 2009; Stevenson, 1990; Verheul et al., 2010) in which motivation is viewed as a continuum of push and pull.

To complete the approach, we propose to integrate the levels of motivation. A social entrepreneur is motivated at the individual level (like the commercial entrepreneur), but also at the social level, as he or she develops the ability to understand social needs and find social opportunities. The idea of considering different levels in the study of social entrepreneurship has already been proposed by Emin and Schieb - Bienfait (2011).

In terms of the economics of incentives, economic issues do not seem to be central to social entrepreneurs. Most of them have decided to quit their jobs to create social enterprises where they earn less than before, others have other jobs lined up, and a third do not want to try either the wage system or traditional entrepreneurship. They are confident in their employability; they know they can find work if the project fails. The only financial concern they share is the need to make a living from their project in order to continue to develop their chosen activity.

Other factors were also identified, such as the influence of religious models and values. The latter is similar to the concepts of compassion and prosocial motivation recognized by Miller et al. (2012). Social entrepreneurs are motivated by a combination of personal and cultural/environmental reasons. This finding is similar to that of Dana (1997). In his study of ethnic groups, Dana (1997) states that entrepreneurship can be described as orthodox (culturally based) or reactionary (circumstance driven). Similarly, social entrepreneurs can be described as orthodox (Gabbaret et al., 2008) (when their motivation is based on religious values) or reactionary (when their motivation is a reaction to lack of motivation in their environment). Dana (1997) also distinguishes between the self and phenomena such as cultural values and social structure. His analysis shows that different groups develop entrepreneurship for different reasons.

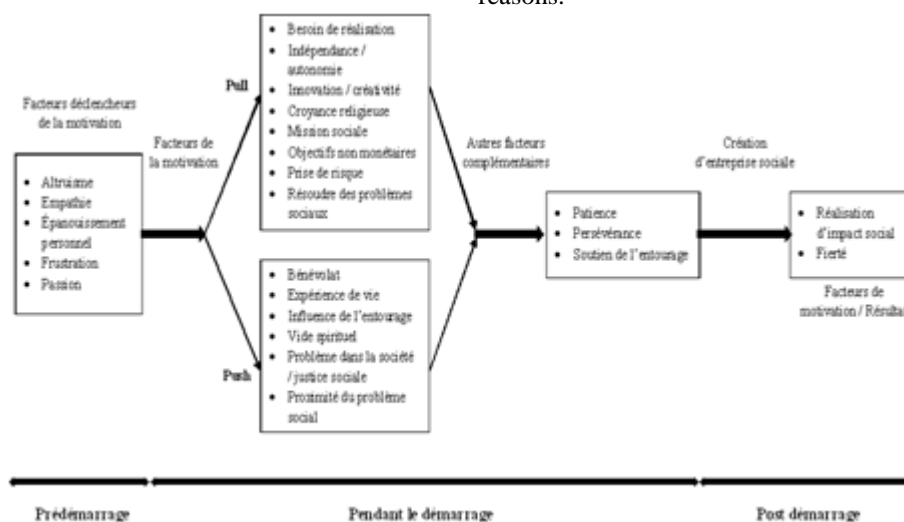


Figure 2: Model of the motivation process among Moroccan social entrepreneurs

The analysis of the interviews yielded interesting results that will enrich entrepreneurship research. From a theoretical perspective, we contribute to the field of motivation in two ways. First, we have developed a push and pull approach that seeks to explain the motivation of social entrepreneurs and we have paid particular attention to "mixed motivations" (Verheul et al., 2010), i. e., all factors that have not been identified as pull or push factors. In doing so, we join a growing group of authors who propose to examine motivation as a continuum, where there may be many combinations of push and pull factors (Hughes, 2003; Kirkwood, 2009; Stevenson, 1990).

Second, the creation of businesses with a social mission deepens our understanding of the entrepreneurial motivations of social entrepreneurs. As Shaw and Carter

(2007) argue, the motivations of social entrepreneurs are different from those of business entrepreneurs. This paper shows that this difference is based on a mix of push/pull, personal and social needs. From a practical standpoint, the renewed interest in social entrepreneurship (Nichols, 2010; Shaw and Carter, 2007; Zahra et al, 2009) and the increase in the number of social entrepreneurs are realities that need to be addressed. A better understanding of social entrepreneurship can lead to a better understanding of emerging changes in the economic sector.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this study, through interviews and data analysis, we were able to find 25 motivational themes among twenty Moroccan social entrepreneurs. Of these 25 themes, although most

have already been identified by previous researchers, we propose eight new or enhanced outcomes in our study, namely frustration, self - fulfillment, social problem solving, volunteering, patience, perseverance, achieving social impact, and pride.

By using the push/pull motivation framework to compare the differences and similarities in motivations between business and social entrepreneurs, we were able to gain a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial motivations.

### **Theoretical contributions**

In general, we believe that the greatest theoretical contribution of this study is the comprehensive model of the entrepreneurial motivation framework. In this framework, we used a set of motivational factors from different theories by linking them all to the pull/push theory. We then proposed three phases of the motivational process to better illustrate and explain the role and relationship of motivational factors in the social engagement process.

The second theoretical contribution of this study is the comparative study of the business entrepreneur and the social entrepreneur. Traditionally, researchers have focused primarily on studying the motivation of commercial entrepreneurs, and the differences between social and commercial entrepreneurs have received very little attention. The results of our comparative study not only fill in the gaps in this area, but also lay the foundation for our overall model of entrepreneurial motivation.

## **5. Managerial Contributions**

We have found that many social entrepreneurs measure their success by non - monetary social missions, and we also know that business success cannot be based on these non - measurable criteria. Therefore, if social entrepreneurs focus too much on their social missions and ignore the importance of financial success, it will lead to serious and negative consequences.

We suggest that social entrepreneurs seek a balance between pursuing their social missions and financial success. Indeed, any enterprise must rely on financial success to be sustainable and social enterprises are no exception. A social enterprise that does not have a sustainable financial stream will not only have limited social impact, but its survival will be threatened.

Social entrepreneurs need to be aware of the environmental challenges they will face before creating their ambitious social enterprise. Understanding the legal and bureaucratic environment is essential to creating and sustaining their enterprise. They must also carefully recruit their partners and management team, ensuring that they possess essential character traits for the local context. They must combine compassion, risk - taking and innovation with the perseverance needed to survive in a challenging institutional environment. They must also ensure that they are sufficiently motivated to solve social problems and build essential social networks.

## **6. Research Limitations**

Due to the research method and data source, all research has its limitations and our study is no exception. In fact, the results of this study may suffer from the three aspects presented below.

The small sample size and lack of quantitative empirical results may affect the reliability and validity of the results.

The field of social entrepreneurship is too atypical for the findings to be generalized or applied to other fields of social entrepreneurship.

Because we are not able to reach all participants to conduct our interview, incomplete data and methodological triangulation may affect the quality of the results.

In addition, it is important to note that the results of this qualitative study can only be generalized to the sample studied and not to an entire population of social entrepreneurs. Similarly, there are social entrepreneurship practitioners who have been highly trained and educated but fail to make a significant impact in their social entrepreneurship activities. Future research should compare the motivation of different types of social entrepreneurs (nascent vs. mature, trained vs. untrained, etc.) to better understand the motivational framework proposed for social entrepreneurs and its impact on outcomes).

## **7. Prospects**

Despite these limitations, we suggest that future research increase the sample size and expand to all areas of social entrepreneurship in order to gain a broader and deeper understanding and advance the theory of social entrepreneurial motivation. We hope that our study can inspire more empirical research on the field of social entrepreneurial motivation and develop more managerial implications that could help social entrepreneurs improve their business performance and social impact.

The model paves the way for future studies to empirically test the factors affecting the success of social enterprises in various contexts. It paves the way for future cross - national studies to document contextual differences between developed and developing countries. It also encourages further studies to identify more environmental factors that support or hinder the success of social enterprises.

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