

The Role of Actor's Network in the Development of Entrepreneurial Social Capital

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Abstract: The concept of social capital has emerged gradually and has too often been presented and perceived as a discipline in itself. Also, this concept has a complex relationship with other discipline such as economy and sociology.

The social capital, actors and networks are experiencing an unprecedented revival. Indeed, the social enterprises play a key role in synergizing existing Human and material resources in a spirit of complementarity, enriching social capital and networks, and also developing collective intelligence. Moreover, these social enterprises strengthen their territorial roots and participate actively in the prosperity of the local community.

The main purpose of this paper is to try to clarify the conceptualization of social capital and the important role of Actor's Network in Entrepreneurial Social Capital

Keywords - Social Entrepreneurship, Actor's Network, Social Capital, Entrepreneurial Social Capital, Networks.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of social entrepreneurship has emerged gradually and has too often been presented and perceived as a discipline in itself. Also, this concept has a complex relationship with other discipline such as economy and sociology. Indeed, the social entrepreneurship is used to describe different organizations that have non-profitability aim and that reinvest a large part of their surpluses in support of their mission.

The social entrepreneurship is increasingly being used to refers to the organizations that have entrepreneurial initiatives that serve a social and environmental mission.

This enterprises have close and strong relationship with actors and territories in which they emerge, they serves a collective aim and are guided by principles and practices of cooperation, solidarity, ethics and democratic self-management.

The social enterprises play a key role in synergizing existing Human and material resources in a spirit of complementarity, enriching social capital and networks and also developing collective intelligence. Moreover, these social enterprises strengthen their territorial roots and participate actively in the prosperity of the local community.

H. ZAOUAL states that « Les valeurs sur lesquelles reposent ces formes de vie, expriment, en réalité, la nécessité de changer de définition quant à l'Homme dans sa vie quotidienne. Ce n'est pas celle d'un Homo oeconomicus qui est recherchée mais celle d'un Homo relationnel et solidaire [Homo situs] avec ses semblables et son territoire à partir duquel il agit concrètement » (ZAOUAL, 2006), and concluded that « le territoire au sens du site est donc une sorte de médiateur entre l'individu et l'expérience, un filtre, un système qui impose, en tant que processus collectif de proximité ses contraintes et son expertise aux individus. Le site crée ainsi : les règles qui satisfont momentanément l'efficacité sociale de la vie de ses organisations et de ses réseaux » (ZAOUAL, 1998).

The main purpose of this paper is to try to clarify the conceptualization of social capital and the important role of Actor's Network in Entrepreneurial Social Capital.

II. SOCIAL CAPITAL CONCEPTUALIZATION APPROACHES

The notion of social capital is currently experiencing a real success in the social sciences. Several economic and social researchers have stressed the importance of social capital with the phenomenon of entrepreneurship.

Indeed, the conceptual origins of the notion of social capital are embedded in economic sociology works that explore the relationship between the institutional and social field, and the economic situation of agents.

In this perspective, Pierre Bourdieu was one of the founding fathers of social capital he is the first contemporary author to have done a systematic analysis of this concept

In his analyzes, Bourdieu considers capital as a rare resource that individuals seek to value. In doing so, he distinguishes three types of capital: economic capital, cultural capital and social capital.

Bourdieu defines social capital as « l'ensemble des ressources actuelles ou potentielles qui sont liées à la possession d'un réseau durable de relations plus ou moins institutionnalisées d'interconnaissance ou d'interreconnaissance ; ou, en d'autres termes, de l'appartenance à un groupe, comme ensemble d'agents qui ne sont pas seulement dotés de propriétés communes (susceptibles d'être perçues par l'observateur, par les autres ou par eux-mêmes) mais sont aussi unis par des liaisons permanentes et utiles. Ces relations sont irréductibles aux relations objectives de proximité dans l'espace physique (géographique) ou même dans l'espace économique et social parce qu'elles sont fondées sur des échanges inséparablement matériels et symboliques dont l'instauration et la perpétuation supposent la reconnaissance de cette proximité. [...] Le volume du capital social que possède un agent particulier dépend donc de l'étendu du réseau des liaisons qu'il peut effectivement mobiliser et du volume du capital (économique, culturel ou symbolique) possédé en propre par chacun de ceux auxquels il est lié [...], il exerce un effet multiplicateur sur le capital possédé en propre [...]. Les profits que procure l'appartenance à un groupe sont au fondement de la solidarité qui les rend possible. [...] L'existence d'un réseau de liaisons n'est pas un donné naturel [...], mais le produit du travail d'instauration et d'entretien qui est nécessaire pour produire et reproduire des liaisons durables et utiles, propres à procurer des profits matériels et symboliques [...], [le réseau] est le produit de stratégie d'investissement social consciemment ou inconsciemment orientées vers l'institution ou la reproduction de relations sociales directement utilisables, à court ou à long terme » (BOURDIEU, 1980).

In short, Bourdieu insists on the dynamic dimension of social capital, he's theory is relational, it is based on the idea that social relationships, norms, shared values, and trust facilitate coordination or cooperation between individuals or groups. Social capital appears as property of individual and group.

In the 1980s, James Coleman develops the concept of social capital in a slightly different sense. His ambition was to formulate a general theory of social action that integrates sociological and economic approaches, he affirms that « There are two broad intellectual streams in the description and explanation of social action. One, characteristic of the work of most sociologists, sees the actor as socialized and action as governed by social norms, rules, and obligations. The principal virtues of this intellectual stream lie in its ability to describe action in social context and to explain the way action is shaped, constrained, and redirected by the social context. The other intellectual stream, characteristic of the work of most economists, sees the actor as having goals independently arrived at, as acting independently, and as wholly self-interested » (COLEMAN, 1988).

In this sense, Coleman defines social capital as a resource « a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspects of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors-whether persons or corporate actors-within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible. Like physical capital and human capital, social capital is not completely fungible but may be specific to certain activities. A given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others » (COLEMAN, 1988).

In this perspective, Coleman presents social capital as a resource for the actors, which facilitates the action of the actors within the structures of relations in which they take place. Therefore, it is a trusted support and a factor of collective security that facilitates the establishment of collective action.

Coleman affirms that « The value of the concept of social capital lies first in the fact that it identifies certain aspects of social structure by their functions, just as the concept "chair" identifies certain physical objects by their function, despite differences in form, appearance, and construction. The function identified by the concept of "social capital" is the value of these aspects of social structure to actors as resources that they can use to achieve their interests. By identifying this function of certain aspects of social structure, the concept of social capital constitutes both an aid in accounting for different outcomes at the level of individual actors and an aid toward making the micro-to-macro transitions without elaborating the social structural details through which this occurs » (COLEMAN, 1988). He adds « The public-good aspect of most social capital means that it is fundamentally different position with respect to purposive action than are not other form of capital. Social

capital is important resource for individuals and can greatly affect their ability to act and their perceived quality of life. They have the capability of bringing such capital into being. Yet because many of the benefits of actions that bring social capital into being are the experienced by the persons other than so person so the acting, it is not that person's interest to bring it into being. The result is that most of forms of social capital are created or destroyed as by-product of other activities. Much social capital arises or disappears without anyone's willing it into or out of being » (COLEMAN, 2000).

In short, for Coleman, social capital fosters new forms of collective action within different structures of civil society.

Extending the analyzes and theoretical interpretation of Coleman's social capital, Robert Putnam was the first author to conduct an empirical study of social capital.

Indeed, due to articles published by Putnam: « Bowling alone : America's declining social capital » published in 1995 and « Bowling alone : The collapse and revival of american community » published in 2000, that the concept of social capital has has grown and has recognized global diffusion.

In doing so, Putnam defines social capital as « social capital refers to features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. For a variety of reasons, life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital. In the first place, networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust. Such networks facilitate coordination and communication, amplify reputations, and thus allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved. Finally, dense networks of interaction probably broaden the participants sense of self, developing the 'I' into the 'We', or (in the language of rational-choice theorists) enhancing the participants 'taste' for collective benefits » (PUTNAM, 1995).

In this sense, the social capital presented by Putnam refers to the standards of reciprocity, trust and networks that facilitate coordination and cooperation between its different members.

In doing so, social networks develop social links, trust and standards of reciprocity that reduce uncertainty and promote coordination.

III. THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

The studies and works on social capital were at the origin of the development of the theories of the network. Indeed, the most important theory of the network is developed by Mark Granovetter who is considered today as an essential reference in this specialty.

So, taking inspiration from the analyzes of Karl Polanyi, who advanced the concept of embeddedness, Granovetter asserts that economic action between individuals or organizations is embedded in personal relationships networks and centered on the structure of the general network of these relationships. He writes that embeddedness « rend compte de l'insertion des actions économiques dans des réseaux sociaux, qu'il convient de cerner à partir des relations personnelles et des structures de celle-ci » (GRANOVETTER, 2008).

In this sense, for him, the understanding of social relations is based on the analysis of the links that are established between individual actions and social situations.

In this perspective, the social capital approach is considered an approach that looks at characteristics, the dynamics of networks between individuals and organizations and also the resources mobilized through these networks.

In doing so, the network of relationships between the entrepreneur and his various stakeholders facilitates the realization of the entrepreneurial process.

Indeed, in the theoretical approach of the actor-network (ANT : Actor-Network Theory), Michel Callon proposes a way of studying « l'action [entrepreneuriale] comme une action collective distribuée, qui s'incarne parfois dans la figure d'une agence individuelle, d'autres fois dans celle d'un groupe, mais qui dans tous les cas est une action composée, dispersée, reprise, déviée, relancée [...] Comme le dit Latour, on ne peut faire sans faire faire ; et nos délégués sont massivement des non-humains. Ce que l' on imagine pouvoir faire, ce que l' on a envie de faire dépend d'eux, de ce qu'ils proposent et de la manière dont ils disposent ce dont nous leur proposons » (CALLON, 2006).

Therefore, the entrepreneurial social capital allows, « d'expliquer la relation entre les entrepreneurs et le contexte auquel ils font appel pour faciliter leur action et la rendre plus efficace, en même temps qu'ils assurent la création de valeur pour l'ensemble du projet et de son réseau de valeur. L'entrepreneur fait, prend place, bouge les frontières, construit des passerelles, aide à coller l'ensemble. Étant donné que les relations économiques sont encadrées dans les relations sociales (Granovetter, 1985), ce concept intégrateur, le capital social entrepreneurial ou KSE, indique quelles sont les ressources et les connaissances, qui sont les personnes, où sont les relations sociales, quels sont les dispositifs de communication et de confiance, quelle est l'infrastructure qui facilite la création et légitime les organisations qu'ils aident à construire en même temps qu'ils en font partie. Cela dit, il reste encore à savoir ce qui a été publié spécifiquement à ce sujet dans les revues savantes » (MONTES JOYA, 2012).

In short, entrepreneurial social capital is a dynamic process that facilitates entrepreneurs' access to different material and immaterial resources. In so doing, the entrepreneur is shaped by the different networks he integrates which leads to new forms of entrepreneurship.

IV. CONCLUSION

The concept of social capital has emerged gradually and has too often been presented and perceived as a discipline in itself. Also, this concept has a complex relationship with other discipline such as economy and sociology.

Indeed, the social capital, actors and networks are experiencing an unprecedented revival.

In doing so and due to their high capacity to generate new solidarities, democracy and reciprocity that reduce uncertainty and promote coordination, the social enterprises have rapidly developed and have begun to play a more active and important role in all the territorial dynamics of development.

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