

## The Social Levers of Entrepreneurial Success (An Empirical Study Based on Family SMEs)

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### Abstract:

Entrepreneurial Social Competences (ESC) most advanced practices allows entrepreneurs to avoid the traps that can lead to unnecessary training and the social errors that may prevent them from achieving their objectives. Moreover, the sustainability and the company success depend directly on the individual's ability to push their collaborators to help and to sell, to induce a positive reaction from investors and financial institutions and to control their feelings. The current work offers a detailed insight into the social skills which are acquired and developed throughout the entrepreneurial process, showing their impact on the formation and amplification of the relational capital, and on the success and sustainability of the company. It is true that entrepreneurs ability to build a rich relational network in addition, to surrounding themselves with people likely to provide them with the adequate resources, makes it possible to ensure a good business performance. Qualitative research was conducted on nine Tunisian entrepreneurs in 2020 to prove how efficient these skills are. This research indicates that industrial entrepreneurs face various challenges including the acquisition of the social skills needed to weave an effective network of relationships and develop their social resources in order to obtain the information and assistance necessary for the success and sustainability of the corporation.

**Keywords:** Social Competences, Key Resources, Business Creation, Social networks, Social adaptability, Emotional intelligence.

## 1- Introduction

The concept of skills helps to examine, at a sociological level, the differences in performance and success. Very few studies in the entrepreneurial field as well as in sociology have provided a correlation between the social skills of the entrepreneur (CS) and the social entrepreneurial capital (CSE). Indeed, Baron and Markman (2000, 2003), Neergaard and Madsen (2004), Zhao et al (2010), and Omrane (2014) were interested in the training and development of the ESC and in gathering the particular social skills relevant to an entrepreneur. In fact, this work sheds a complementary light on this articulation.

A macro-level of analysis is used in order to understand the process by which entrepreneurs mobilize their relational capital and social networks in order to equip themselves with the resources required for the survival and the growth of the company. A micro-level of analysis that can lead to the skills that need to be acquired by an entrepreneur to develop their CSE throughout the survival-development phase is also applied. However, this research focuses mainly on social skills which rely on the individual's ability to express themselves, communicate with, understand, persuade and impress others.

In this context, a social approach based on the interactive theory of competence is chosen. It mainly refers to social interactions reflected through relations and exchanges between individuals and the various actors with whom relations are maintained and which will trigger and boost the process of building, forming and developing competence.

To this end, entrepreneurial CSs are highlighted. These skills are developed throughout the entrepreneurial process, notably during the survival development phase characterized by problems related to the asymmetry of information, uncertainty, the scarcity of resources and the lack of legitimacy. They facilitate access to resources, but they are essential for the acquisition of a certain legitimacy and credibility around the viability of the project.

This research paper examines the socio-relational mechanisms and their ability to provide entrepreneurs with the most privileged access to resources in order to ensure the performance and sustainability of the company.

This study aims to clarify the different types of mechanisms through which the entrepreneur's socio-relational skills helps to take advantage of the relational network.

Likewise, it tries to show the importance of the social and relational components to the development of the entrepreneur's social capital which is subject to accumulation, production and depreciation in order to facilitate their access to external resources.

Also, our work provides a deeper understanding of the different types of social competences (SC) that are likely to favor the development of the entrepreneur's social capital and to present their relevance to the access to the necessary resources and the necessary means for the development of the enterprise.

Actually, this research adds new elements to the previously conducted works. It explores the mechanisms through which specific social skills such as social persuasion, emotional self-awareness and valuing others help entrepreneurs develop their social capital.

## **2- Theoretical Scoping**

### **2.1. The role of the entrepreneur's social capital in facilitating access to key resources**

Various studies that have been conducted in the field of economic sociology have shown that many different resources have been mobilized through the contractor's personal network (Bourdieu (1980); Coleman (1990); Putnam (1995))

and that the company success depends on the entrepreneurs' relationship capital and their ability to move within the relationship network (Denieuil, 1992).

The environment, the social culture, as well as the favorable economic situations allow entrepreneurs to enrich and amplify their relational capital. In this respect, Putnam (2000) stated that "a well-connected individual in a poorly connected society is not as productive as a well connected individual in a well-connected society. In addition, even a weakly connected individual living in a well-connected society can benefit from it". (Wiesinger, 2007:11)

In order to understand the mechanisms of the relational structure impact on the allocation of resources by the entrepreneur, the rewards of the entrepreneur's relational capital is highlighted at three important criteria: CS size and structural diversity, the number of strong and weak linkages, and the quality of linkages on access to necessary resources. Similarly, Burt and his collaborators discussed some of the positive effects of the entrepreneurial social network structure and of both the quality and the nature of the social contexts that this network contains on the contractor's access to the external resources requested.

Indeed, the external resources that are of a particular importance for businesses, and whose access is facilitated via a broad relational network are information, financing, and social.

The current paper focuses on the required financial resources as well as the relevant information resources.

Added to that, the mobilized relational capital structure varies during the entrepreneurial process. As the project progresses needs are transformed into essential resources throughout its evolution. The network that conveys these resources has also changed. Throughout the engagement phase, the entrepreneur will also have an exploratory behavior that will allow him to create more computational and less cohesive intentional social networks and pivot towards the exploitation of structural holes in order to ensure the business development. (Hite and Hesterly, 2001).

These social networks, rather formed via a combination of strong and weak links, are not only better diversified but also more expended. As the project advances, the contractor will gradually prune this network while continuing to enrich it with new links. In this way, the breadth of the relational network is an actor that may benefit from a privileged access to varied and valuable information or the speed with which information is obtained before others who do not take advantage of these relationships; thus the recognition of opportunities (Han and Yang, 2013).

For Omrane (2015), an entrepreneur who interacts with people whom he is emotionally unattached to has better access to more useful and complete external information. In addition, studies conducted by Aydi (2003), Djou et al (2020) have shown that interpersonal relationships between bankers and entrepreneurs have positive effects on credit conditions. Relationship capital helps to improve the borrower's risk information. As for Neergaard and Madsen (2004), they showed that the contractor's weak links make it easier to access financial resources.

In this respect, it may be concluded that the entrepreneur's social networks seem to be an important factor of the success or the failure of the project since it presents a key to access resources and the identification of opportunity.

## **2.2. The socio-relational skills of the entrepreneur: a mobilization of resources in business creation**

### **2.2.1. The types and skills of the Socio-Relational Skills with respect to the Contractor**

Social skills provide the entrepreneur with multiple benefits during his entrepreneurial project including working with other organizational members in an efficient way, generating motivation and trust (Lamine et al., 2014), creating collaborations (Peredo and Chrisman, 2004),

Accessing important information and seizing opportunities (Omrane, 2013), fostering the formation of business alliances (Baron and Markman, 2003) and finally obtaining financing (Omrane, 2015).

With regard to these basic assumptions, it can be considered that social sagacity is established in the entrepreneurial field during the social and professional interactions and it could affect the results expected by individuals in different contexts.

### **2.2.2. The effects of the entrepreneur's social and relationship skills on the mobilization of key business creation resources**

Success, attainment, sustainability and failure of companies is a key issue for entrepreneurs. It requires, of course, good management skills and capacities for the consolidation and the development of the project. These skills are linked to the ability to sell and locate in the market. Thus, the skills to radiate and combine the trust of others, those of effectively managing and making the most of one's resources, and finally those of striving for a long-term evolution.

Our theoretical grounding allows us to view engagement as a separate phase of the creation process. The engagement phase translates into the effective transition of the entrepreneur to the act of creation. During this phase, the contractor generally has very few resources in terms of time, attention and funding (Ravasi and Turati, 2005). The acquisition of these resources is often a crucial step in the launch of new projects. At this stage of the process, decision-making skills are identified through the use of choice and commitment skills. This could only happen through strong involvement and a propensity for learning on his part. The role of the entrepreneur consists in his ability to develop his entrepreneurial skills in creation, research and allocation, and in those in the management of the novelty and ambiguity that surround his project.

After a firm commitment and a successful start, the entrepreneur must ensure the survival and development of his business. However, during the project involvement and development, the entrepreneur is confronted with questions of recourse to his strategic and social-relational entrepreneurial skills in order to ensure the viability of his new project. As such, the contractor is committed to continually mobilizing and leveraging new physical, organizational, human and financial resources to support the pace of development of the project.

This paper reports on the diversity of the essential entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and attitudes during the three phases of the business creation process through an initial synthetic examination of the skills identified during the entrepreneurial process.

In this respect, the entrepreneur should particularly have a multidimensional profile to combine with coherently different personal, social and technical skills and development.

### **2.3. Social perception and its scope**

According to many authors, social perception predisposes the entrepreneur to an ability to identify others with relevance. This ability allows the individual to perceive the extent to which partners are reliable, to select better partners or employees, or to conduct effective negotiations with various partners, shareholders, staff, suppliers, customers, etc (Baron and Tang, 2009).

### **2.4. Impression management and its scope**

Baron and Markman (2000, 2003) attest that the printing management skills of the project leader permits him to mobilize the financial resources that he needs through his efforts of self-promotion and praise of others,. In the same perspective, Baron and Tang (2009) tried to analyze the ability of the entrepreneur to return to the good graces of his partners and to self-promotion which allow him to be recognized and valued. In addition to developing a client database, the bank also obtains financing from risk capitalists and other funding agencies.

### **2.5. Interpersonal influence and its scope**

When it comes to the creation of projects, entrepreneurial success depends on the degree of social persuasion. In fact, an entrepreneur with strong persuasive skills could convince bankers, particularly the capitalists, of the risk to grant him the necessary funds for the progress of his entrepreneurial project (Gartner et al., 1992; Markman and Baron, 2003; Baron and Tang, 2009).

### **2.6. Social adaptability and its scope**

Several previous studies confirmed that social adaptability makes it possible to adapt one's behavior to different social situations and positively supports one's professional success and progression skills in one's professional career (Baron, 1999; Baron and Tang, 2009). Indeed, the entrepreneur's social flexibility allows him to establish new business relationships and to obtain better professional results as well as to promote the financial success of his business (Markman and Baron, 2003; Baron and Tang, 2009).

### **2.7. Expressiveness and its scope**

Some authors such as Baron and Markman (2003) and Baron and Tang (2009) showed that expressiveness is the ability to express feelings and reactions to the interlocutors in an appropriate way.

An entrepreneur's ability to express his own emotions and feelings openly can positively impact his entrepreneurial success. Thus, for Cialdini (2001) expressiveness provides assets to persuading customers and convincing bankers to obtain credits.

### **2.8. Emotional intelligence and its scope**

At the professional level, entrepreneurs who are able to develop self-motivation skills, to influence the emotions of others and to express their emotions well are able to acquire the relevant information and funding and may in particular have a competitive advantage that others do not have (Kring et al., 1994).

### **2.9. The effects of the entrepreneur's social skills on the development of his social capital**

The studies in the entrepreneurial field as in sociology have created an articulation between the entrepreneur's social skills and the entrepreneurial social capital. Among these works, we can cite those of Baron and Markman (2000, 2003), Neergaard and Madsen (2004) as well as Boyatzis (2007) who are interested in the training and the development of the ESC within the particular social skills that are available to the entrepreneur.

Diener and Seligman (2002) suggested that people who have capitalized on social skills tend to have more social contacts than people with limited relationship skills. Similarly, Zhao et al (2010) explained the dynamic process through which social skills (i.e., apparent sincerity, networking ability, interpersonal influence, and social intelligence) enable the entrepreneur to mobilize social networks in order to achieve a better entrepreneurial performance.

Since then, we have explored the tool through which specific CS's, namely social persuasion, emotional self-awareness and print management, help entrepreneurs develop their social capital and access external resources.

## **3- Research Methodology:**

This study focuses exclusively on family SMEs (**Small and medium family corporates**) located in Sfax, Tunisia and belonging to the sectors of textiles, food processing, furniture, electro mechanics, chemical industry (perfumery and cosmetics, glue, paint, plastic and maintenance products) and various manufacturing industries. Thus, we conducted a qualitative study in 2020 among nine family SME project leaders. In fact, semi-direct individual interviews were conducted face to face with the entrepreneurs. Each interview lasted between 50 minutes and one hour. In addition to that, interviews were recorded using a Dictaphone and a transcript of the entire speech was recorded.

The results of the content analysis showed that socio-relational skills, already represented at the level of the theoretical scoping of this study, are crucial to SMEs sustainability. These results allowed us to designate the nature of the most significant relationships (personal/ professional) at the level of the relational capital of the entrepreneur in order to retain the links between the three notions of socio-relational skills, relationship capital and mobilization of resources necessary for business creation.

#### **4- Analysis of Results Achieved**

The following is a summary of the main findings from the exploratory study of family SME entrepreneurs. The qualitative study was conducted to better identify and understand the concepts derived from our main research question. Indeed, the content analysis strategy was conducted in a phased approach which revolved around two steps based on the work of Lacroux (2009).

The first step consists in a complete transcription of the information collected via their input. The purpose of the second stage of analysis is to conduct several readings of the collected information in order to be able to dissociate each reading by theme and extract all the information so as to divide the collected discourses into different segments. Depending on the needs and objectives of the exploratory study for a better cross-cutting thematic analysis at the end of this stage, unnecessary data were discarded according to the guidelines of Miles and Huberman (2003).

##### **4.1. Content Analysis of Entrepreneurial Relationship Capital**

The results of our research shed the light on the strong link between social skills, relational capital and the access to external resources. This research highlighted the different positive impacts of the entrepreneur's social capital with the consideration of three key criteria including structure (size of social capital and structural diversity), nature (number of weak links) and quality of links (their heterogeneity) on its access to essential external resources. We tried to get entrepreneurs to give more attention to people who are directly or indirectly involved in the development of their projects and to those who provide financial and informational assistance. Indeed, we determined that they are essentially close acquaintances and at least distant links. Also, we found that the number of these people range from two to ten people. This explains why the size of a good network does not have to be large since one of its roles is to be able to connect to other networks.

Some of the contractors interviewed stated that most of the relationships they have developed so far are rather professional and held with clients, suppliers, or probably with some administrative officials, They added that these relationships established generally from the engagement phase have evolved in terms of scope, proximity and frequency of interaction, but they remain merely professional and focused on mutual exchange and collaboration.

One interviewee said, “My varied and diversified professional contacts are the most important as they are the most appropriate ones to have the right information, obtain authorizations, find funds, markets, good employees, etc.”

Other surveyed entrepreneurs reported that they developed weak links with: “neutral agents” either directly during their search for information or indirectly through friends, relatives or trusted entrepreneurs (strong links).

Several respondents then testify to the importance of relational capital composed of people who do not have the same knowledge networks and who have distinct social positions stemming from distinct social circles. An interviewee testifies that “The relational environment of the economic actor is a set of social relations, networks and individual actions, it is really important to have a circle of relations coming from different social networks to be able to exchange this diversity of contacts, to make your network rich (...) the factors that led to the development of this project are both external and internal”.

Some respondents noted that social relationships help to access valuable information. Yet, the information provided by personal contacts is more useful, more relevant, more exclusive and less redundant than that received from more formal sources dense networks can also facilitate the imitation of business practices and products. Thus, the entrepreneur who has weak links with other actors has more access to the resources of advantageous information than to other resources.

Some other entrepreneurs stated that the professional relationships they have at their disposal will be strengthened and are likely to become more intensive over time if their businesses progresses. These entrepreneurs attest that their professional knowledge has given them access to information and that it is also a source of funding in the sense that it also highlight the role of their referral networks in convincing investors. They add that most of the relationships they have developed so far are rather professional and held with clients, suppliers, or are probably held with some administrative officials,

They noted that these relationships, were established generally from the engagement phase, they have evolved in terms of scope, proximity and frequency of interaction, but they remain on the whole professional and focused on mutual exchange and collaboration. This result is further supported by the work of (Granovetter, 1973, 2005), which considers “weak links” likely to lead to better business opportunities and provide privileged access to larger markets, especially beyond a much localized social circle.

The relationships highlighted by the contractors interviewed vary from personal to professional depending on the project development phase. Indeed, the respondents indicated that the close ties with the family circle, the relatives, provide essential support for any entrepreneurial approach particularly in the start-up phase. We concluded that family equity is an essential asset in the family business. This allows us to conclude that the entrepreneurial social network goes through several sizes, depending on the phases of business creation, and that the good use of this network reflects the level of the company’s performance.

#### **4.2. Content Analysis of Access to External Resources**

The most cited constraint when starting a business is the lack of financial resources. However, credit markets suffer from information asymmetry between lenders and borrowers. Indeed, the major challenge facing these companies is to obtain the resources essential for the performance and the survival of the company.

It was noted from the interviewee’s testimonies that strong ties are positively related to the access of to financial resources that are required for a business development. Initially, the company can afford to finance itself with equity and informal loans within the family or neighbors, without resorting to foreign capital. Among the testimonials a contractor states: “ I come from a modest family who encouraged me morally and financially to start my business, my father and my uncles are great shoe traders ( more than 40 years old), it served us as a visa, to enter the market. So the good reputation of the parent company has helped me a lot in making my investment successful”. Another person said:” Finding the funding to start a project, which is the first step to success, is the most difficult step towards starting a business. This period is particularly critical because the risks are high. In short, there are few banks that agree to bring money at this stage, between us entrepreneurs and a banker there is a strong asymmetry of information this is a major obstacle when it comes to financing a business creation, the challenge is even greater when you’re a young entrepreneur.”

So the need for funding increases with the growth of its activities. Therefore, the contractor will seek external financial partners. Indeed, maintaining closer ties with bankers allows entrepreneurs to have better access to bank loans. The results show that the entrepreneur who multiplies close relationships with high-ranking people, managers of the administration or executives of financial institutions is more advantaged to access external resources.

One of the interviewees said: “The existence of a social link between the banker and a business manager with whom we have a close relationship is very useful for accessing the required financing; it allows us to have a bank loan, because we were recommended by a client of the bank that we already appreciate”. Another entrepreneur confirmed that “when we benefit from a strong relationship network, especially those of influence, it is an advantage that can help us to take advantage of a bank loan in order to develop our business”.

This result confirms the statements of Chi et al (2015) and Elouze et al (2021) which show that social networks are effective in reducing uncertainty in the banking sector. Following the evolution of the entrepreneur’s relational networking during the different stages of the entrepreneurial process, we found that with the development of the company, the contractor faces a major problem of penetrating the most relevant and useful information, being able to manage and control it. We have also found that the sources of information collected vary between internal and external actors. For example, one of the contractors interviewed said: “The suppliers of raw materials and materials as well as the fairs also present a source of information for me. For example for raw material suppliers the identification and knowledge of their requirements in terms of delivery times, means of delivery, payment method and product quality generate information that must be captured to make it useful for decision-making and effective strategies”. Indeed, the results found support the vision of Ginsburg (1980) which affirms that formal information systems increase the capacity to process information by facilitating the flow of information and by developing the decision-maker’s cognitive capacity

### **4.3. Social Skills Content Analyses**

By consulting entrepreneurs on the different socio-relational skills that have enabled them to amplify their social capital to support their access to external resources. We realized that most respondents give a specific precaution to certain types of social skills, which are also: persuasion and social influence, self-esteem, self-efficacy and good grace (the effects of valuing others).

Indeed, the ability to manage one's relationship, to convince, to persuade and to influence, to build confidence, self-motivation and self-management are the social skills that entrepreneurs should develop.

In this sense, our interviewees tackled the importance of communicating well with others and establishing trusting relationships with them, as well as motivating workers and being sensitive to their emotions. One of the interviewees said:” In the company, communication is paramount. Everyone must know that it is important, whether it's the courier; the workers or the manager. We accompany the person who works with us at all levels. If there are any absences, we try to understand why the person was absent, now there is a good working atmosphere, a group of people dynamic led in the same momentum, a common cause to make the result. I see in the total commitment of my assistants a well-shared desire to move forward and win together”.

Nevertheless, these remarks are consistent with the research of Bernoux (2002) who presents the importance of the bargaining function in a group, because it recognizes each individual as different and admits him as a member of the group. Moreover, Sainsaulieu (1995) bases collective identities on the fact that “individuals share the same logic of actors”. Thus, the creation of a group identity in the company is seen by the creation of particular relational norms. Referring to the work of Bandura (2003) as well as Markman et al (2005) and according to what was stated by interviewees, self-efficacy is another dimension that could be relevant to the previously mentioned social competence.

As a result, emotional intelligence, sustainability and success depend directly on the individuals ability to control their emotions and those of others. The results of our research show that emotional intelligence helps entrepreneurs to adapt to change. I also, it enables it them to make entrepreneurial decisions and access external resources.

Among the interviewed persons one contractor testified this by stating that:”the most delicate phase in the creation of a company is the maturation phase, at this level the head of the company must show intelligence perseverance and motivation until his company takes off, aiming at achieving a certain balance, the must know how to sell and to convince the other and win a negotiation when the situation demands it, build up a clientele, be up to date and surpass competitors.”

This is in line with the remarks of Crozier and Friedberg (1977) who emphasize the need for a successful change to give certain flexibility to the organization beforehand.

Indeed, the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace has been proven by several researches carried out since the emergence of the concept. In fact, this study has found that a manager's that have been personality and his or her way of controlling emotions do not necessarily influence the company's entrepreneurial behavior, with the exception of risk-taking. In this way, the ability to take risks is innate in humans and not acquired. Indeed, the entrepreneur's personality influences his decision-making ability, which results in a lack of clarity and a low percentage of certainty, and this explains the positive relationship between self-awareness and risk-taking. As the project evolves, the skills of the entrepreneur develop and enable him to provide answers for complex problems.

As part of this idea someone among the interviewees stated: "I received information that one of the biggest customers has just declared bankruptcy, it was a blow to our company at this incident but we should always fouson flexibility to deal with the ups and downs of a given industry, in other worts we need to be able to react quickly to the challenges.", another person adds: "When a problem arises, everything we had planned becomes obsolete". The first two skills that dominate are technical and social, something that is learned in action, and often adapted to the situation in which one finds oneself ».

However, with the growth of the project the entrepreneur will call on investors or credit institutions, to supplement the financial needs of the company, and to increase the share capital. The entrepreneurs interviewed, highlighted the fact that the creator must rely on his social and relational skills, especially his qualities as a negotiator. Therefore, the entrepreneur is called upon to develop and to exploit the social skills that generate the most social ties, also, to adhere certain emotional, psychological and social skills to a set of entrepreneurial skills, that are specific for each phase of the entrepreneurial process. In this context, the entrepreneur should use his persuasive skills to convince potential investors wich the credibility of his project, and to promote his access to the resources that he needs, in order to advance his entrepreneurial project. Nevertheless, the results of the research clearly show that, faced with this profound change characterized by technological and technical growth and the rapid development of knowledge, the penetration at the level of the most relevant and useful information appears to be one of the main challenges for the entrepreneurs. Penetrating these resources allows him to overcome the difficulties of environmental uncertainty resulting from the scarcity of resources,

ignorance and lack of information, as well as the difficulties of knowing and seeing the actions and reactions of individuals as in the chemical, electrical, mechanical and industrial sectors.

As for as this research is concerned, according to the testimonies of the interviewees the entrepreneur is called to create relational networks, that would allow him to amplify close relationships with other individuals, belonging to different organizations, wich facilitates access to essential and recoverable resources.

Moreover, from what we have shown in the results, a majority of entrepreneurs are generally characterized by enthusiasm and emotional intelligence that are linked to their self-confidence, their self-efficacy, their emotional self-control and their self-determination developing a relational composed of essentially weak and diverse contacts. Thus, the results found show that socially competent entrepreneurs are more chanced to easily increase their social capital.

To conclude, it will be necessary to restate the key stakeholders of family SMEs, such as investors, customers, suppliers or other professionals. Therefore, these people are carried away by entrepreneurial skills, interpersonal influence and emotional self-awareness, and they are not tempted enough by the flattery and praise tactics engaged by the entrepreneur.

## **5- Discussion:**

The present work has explored how the value attached to the specificities family business can either be created or destroyed in the dynamics of the social capital. Initially, the entrepreneur can finance his project through his own funds, but the need for cash flow increases as the company grows. This growth will push the entrepreneur to secure his formal relational capital and leads to more efficient actions.

The social capital developed by entrepreneurs guarantees integration within the socio-economic network of the territory which impacts their reputation and visibility which is acquired in the entrepreneurial approach. Yet, providing a rich relational capital is not enough as this capital should be well used and wisely exploited. certainly, entrepreneurs' ability to build a rich relational network and surround themselves with people likely to provide them with the resources necessary for the proper functioning of their business can boost their business performance and sustainability.

Our work has also offered a detailed insight into social skills. These skills enable the identification of entrepreneurial opportunities and access to information and knowledge that support their exploitation.

It is obvious that the enterprise must be endowed with the capacity to change, adapt, acquire and assimilate external knowledge. These are, in fact, three specific social skills that help entrepreneurs during the survival-development phase, to mobilize entrepreneurial social capital, and providing to have access to informational and resources (come from external actors) and financial (via bankers) necessary for the development of the company which are: (1) social persuasion is appropriate to the manner in which he approaches a discussion and communicates in different contexts in which he attends, most often offering him the opportunity to solicit the financing required for the take-off of his business, (2) managing the impression through good graces is consistent with self-promotion and praise of others, predisposing them to mobilize the financial resources they need, (3) emotional intelligence facilitates individual adaptation and ability to change and consequently entrepreneurial success. It also makes it possible to make entrepreneurial decisions and helps the entrepreneur to access external resources.

From all what have been studies in this research, the performance and the sustainability of the company depends directly on the ability of the individual to influence his collaborators in order to seek their help, to sell themselves and to induce a positive reaction towards investors and financial institutions and also, to control one's emotions and those of others. Therefore, the social skills of an entrepreneur revolve around his ability to bring together actors from different backgrounds.

As a result, entrepreneurs can achieve their goals faster, if they adjust their communication methods to persuasion, so if they have a good knowledge of persuasion techniques, this will facilitate their business. In addition, social perception, self-expression and expressiveness also have a positive impact on the performance of companies.

Beyond that, every entrepreneur is therefore at the heart of tensions related to the situations in which he acts and to the very nature of his action. These tensions can be seen in cases of the entrepreneurs interviewed, depending on the case, blocking, annoying or sources of overreach and innovation. Therefore, the entrepreneur must know how to take charge of the situation so that it does not affect the productivity and the involvement of each one, and that it doesn't create any negative consequences for the company.

Several techniques and practices of staging and imagination of the different probable situations have the ultimate vocation to develop, among entrepreneurs, the skills of interaction and effective communication with others.

However, on one part, the technique of anchoring is to associate a gesture with a positive feeling. The simple act of repeating this gesture in stressful situations, serves to train a leader to be constantly focused on his objectives and to remain attentive to maintain his balance with others, on a second part, on the technique of the spectator, which aims to develop the persuasive skills of the entrepreneur in his interaction with key stakeholders.

## 6- Conclusion

In this qualitative exploratory study, we shed light on the contributions of the socio-relational skills to the light of the notion of entrepreneurial social capital facilitating access to external resources. In addition, environmental conditions can lead to the business survival or disappearance. Thus, companies may face two main challenges. The first challenge includes the need for responsiveness in the face of heightened competitive intensity, increasing customer power and the globalization of markets while the second challenge comprises the development of information and communication technologies that contribute to exchanges within and outside a company (Louart, 1996).

Of course, the more the entrepreneur is able to access and master useful and reliable information, the more he will be able to manage the evolution of the market and the less his company will feel vulnerable to changes in its environment. Indeed, the most advanced practices of entrepreneurial social skills make it possible to avoid the pitfalls that lead to good unnecessary training for entrepreneurs and to social mistakes that could threaten the achievement of their intended objectives. To conclude, the socially competent entrepreneur is more prepared to increase and develop his social capital which facilitates his access to the essential external resources required for the survival/development of SMEs.

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