



## The Evaluation of the Training Engineering of Moroccan Cooperatives for Better Performance

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### Abstract

Experiences confirm that organizations maintaining strong training systems are more performant but others show that it had small effect and influence still be minim comparing with investment. In this study, we consider that training in cooperatives is compulsory and requires an evaluation to have real meaning for managers. Accordingly, empirical research of an evaluation training engineering for 30 Moroccan cooperatives during one year on the purpose of real observation of relations between training policy and performance.

**Keywords:** *Training engineering, Morocco, Cooperatives, Performance*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Whether they are educational or professional, training systems, are now more than ever subject to important pressure to value their performance for better piloting, this approach is not new, as Landsheere (1994) points out: as soon as the first American Ministry of Education was created in 1867, it was specified that it was to be published every year “statistics and observations on the state and progress of trainings in education”. After many researchers, methodological methods have been developed to assess the performance of training systems and provide managers with a number of indicators via dashboards that can help decision making. Vocational training systems are no exception and are increasingly subject to external evaluations or audits. These methods offered by education or training economists, whose primary concern is to improve the performance of systems, have been treated from an economic perspective, through two types of indicators: on the first hand, indicators linked to the productivity of the systems to measure their effectiveness in terms of the results obtained; on the second hand, indicators related to investments especially for the costs of training, interested in the study of the efficiency of the systems and their ability to obtain the results for the least cost.

International experts now agree to articulate the challenge of evaluating training systems around these three key concepts: effectiveness, efficiency and equity (Sall & De Ketele<sup>3</sup>, 1997). More and more small structures believe in the training from “mandatory expenditure” training to training “investment” (Caspar and Afriat, 1988; Walther, 1988). Intuitively, most realize that some training is necessary, even indispensable, for the survival of the company. The aim of this paper is only to explain the different dimensions to be taken into account in the evaluation of training systems. We do not wish, at this stage of our reflection, to go into detail on the measurement of the different indicators relating to the different dimensions, nor in the study of the methodological difficulties that it poses, even if these questions are fundamental..

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Analytical framework

AFNOR (1992) defines training as a set to people leaving the school system to reach a level of knowledge as the training objective. One dimension is missing in this definition, especially in terms of the individual. In effect, training improves particularly important human qualities and makes it possible to improve the management system of the organizations. Kirkpatrick (1976) proposes four levels of training evaluation, corresponding to four levels of action:

- The “hot” evaluation on the modalities of the training followed;
- Evaluation of the knowledge of individuals;
- Assessment of the transfer of acquired knowledge to the workplace;
- Evaluation of the results of training on the company.

This fourth level appears like the one that best corresponds to the questions of a researcher in management sciences (Martory, 1992), training seen as an important means of improving the company's performance (Caron, 1994). The most important issue is at this level. But the difficulties methodology is amplified when the assessment affects the enterprise rather than the individual (Maher and Kur 1983; Kirkpatrick 1977). Many other variables that training can influence the management system and make it difficult to link such results to such and such action.

Considering the classic configuration of the cooperatives, the results seem more direct and less diffuse, which certainly facilitates the perception of the impact of training on the management system (Roger, 1985). The working in cooperatives therefore brings some methodological and reduced benefits the difficulties encountered.

### **Determining training policies**

The description of these training policies involves the identification of method of evaluation of the main implementation procedures. It is necessary to present these determinants. Training expense is clearly and mainly important and allow to measure the degree of involvement training. Cooperatives choosed to devote a percentage higher than mandatory spending are rather rare, unless enjoying temporarily mutual funds. The proportion of enterprises spending more than the percentage appears to increase with size (CEREQ, 1992). In small structures, the most characteristic of training seems to be the training plan. Indeed, it appears that small organizations remain underdeveloped (Van Auken, 1982; D'Amboise and Bakanibona, 1990; D'Amboise, 1994), this being verified for human resource management actions, generally less formal in the smaller structures (Mcevoy, 1983; Mahé de Boislandelle, 1994). It remains possible to apply this finding training planning, which is often limited (Mcevoy 1983). However, training plans must ensure greater consistency while allowing for flexibility. Another key aspect of training policy remains the projection works over time. Some managers lead to developing projects longer-term training that is integrated into an overall intertake. Others are

content with one-off “one-on-one” actions, often reactive to a crisis. A long term vision remains more linked to increased formalization and a more proactive vision, allowing us to anticipate problems. It would appear that the training efforts undertaken in cooperatives do not take into account the long-term projects of the company (Fairfield-Sonn, 1987). In order to be able to link training actions with the company, the performance approach seems essential, the evaluation of Success can be multifaceted (Baldwin 1994). The choice to approach this performance in a global, systemic and dynamic involves finding a suitable general model. The model that served Marchesnay’s (1992) basic search for performance indicators in which the management system of cooperatives is represented by an articulated diagram around four main areas: the goals of the leader, the environment, the organization organization and activities. These divisions are linked by key concepts, such as the business line, the organization's mission, culture, identity or action plan. Performance is understood through the perceived evolution of the various indicators, constructed from a literature review on possible influences of training on the components of the cooperative management system.

### **The Social and Solidarity Economy in Morocco**

The Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) represents an important economic and social development opportunity for the country. National and local authorities have, since the 1990s, measured the potential of SSE in terms of job creation and activity, the fight against poverty, precariousness and marginalization due to how the SSE structures operate and organize (collective initiative, proximity on the ground, etc.). It thus contributes to the production of goods and services at this level by contributing to the creation of jobs and value added. It therefore improves the standard of living of households and alleviates poverty. At the organizational level, the social economy is exercised in Morocco in the framework of cooperatives, associations, mutuels and foundations. All of these organizations would respect the basic values of the social economy by focusing on the integration of individuals into economic activity. Several sectors are covered by these organizations: agriculture, crafts, housing, tourism, forestry, financial services, health and social services, employment integration, education, cultural activities, etc; While the exercise of economic activities within the framework of these organizations is aimed at helping to meet urgent social needs and responding to critical social situations not met by the State or the private sector, it also reflects, on the one hand, the search for and establishment of new relations with these two sectors and, on the other hand, the trend towards anchoring a participatory and proximity approach to socio-economic development from the bottom up. The crucial role played by the cooperative sector

in the evolution of economic and social conditions, particularly at the territorial level, is well established; it is even considered by several experts as the best alternative to the failures of capitalism today and constitutes a real societal surplus value for the territories and support it must be a priority. Indeed, this sector has opened up great horizons for the creation of economic and social projects whose main ambition is to combat poverty, exclusion and the integration of small producers in the market and on the other hand, for the identification of opportunities to respond to the specific needs of a vulnerable population marginalized by the capitalist economy, and for the realization of these opportunities through the implementation of appropriate entrepreneurial solutions. It is a model, inspired by a balance between the values of equality, equity, solidarity, and empowerment, which has evolved between practice and the ideal. This organizational innovation project is still challenging the traditional conception of the economy and business management. These creative social initiatives have multiplied in recent years in Morocco, thanks to the launch of the National Initiative for Human Development Morocco has a relatively high unemployment rate (9.2% according to figures from the High Commission for Planning in 2013) particularly among young people, and the weight of the informal sector is far from negligible.

In Morocco, although the culture of solidarity, mutual aid and collective work, which constitute the basic principles of the social economy, is part of the traditions, the emergence of the sector in a structured and organized form, especially for its associative component, date of the 1980s and early 1990s. Indeed, the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) during this period has resulted in a gradual disengagement of the State from several economic and social sectors, which has had rather harmful effects on employment, on the supply of public services and on the purchasing power of the population. Social economy organisations, particularly cooperatives, have developed rapidly and have gained ground in several areas, which have long been reserved for the State: the provision of local services and basic facilities, particularly in the rural world, the fight against illiteracy, the creation and support of development projects, the promotion and integration of women in the economic circuit, the financing of small projects, etc. In all these areas, social economy organizations perform work that is recognized by public authorities, as well as by populations or international organizations. The strength of social economy enterprises lies in their proximity to the people, their knowledge of the ground, their flexible mode of operation that allows them to intervene quickly and effectively. Even today, since the launch of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH), by King Mohammed VI, on May 18, 2005, cooperatives have mobilized strongly to

succeed in this major project. They intervene to identify the needs of the populations, carry out income-generating activities, participate in the financing, organize the beneficiaries of the projects, participate in the governance bodies of the INDH, etc.

### **Cooperatives: Special Features and Principles**

Cooperatives are often born out of the imperative of meeting a community need, whether economic, social or cultural. As a result, many cooperatives have taken off in difficult economic times. They met needs that neither traditional businesses nor governments were able to meet. The benefits of cooperatives would outweigh just meeting needs. Many reports have shown that cooperatives will contribute to poverty reduction in developing countries. Paul Lambert (1964), one of the contemporary thinkers of corporatism, points out that “These initiators' moral preoccupations are: they all see cooperation as much more than the solution of a momentary and partial problem: they see it as a formula capable of renovating the whole economic and social system and of elevating men to a moral behavior made of nobility and disinterestedness». This is precisely the case with cooperative entrepreneurship. Co-operatives are founded and managed by universally recognized principles, by global bodies. Thus, the cooperative principles set out in the Declaration on the International Identity of Cooperatives (International Cooperative Alliance, 1995) are the guidelines that enable cooperatives to put their values into practice:

- Voluntary and open to all: Freedom and Personal Responsibility.
- Democratic power exercised by members: Equality and Democracy
- Member Economic Participation: Mutual Responsibility and Sharing.
- Autonomy and independence: Equity and Probity.
- Education, training and information: Transparency.
- Cooperation between cooperatives: Solidarity.
- Community Engagement: Social Responsibility and Citizenship.

### **3. Methods and Materials**

The Office du Development of Cooperation (ODCO) works, within the framework of the tasks assigned to it by Law 24/84, to the creation and support of craft cooperatives through extension, training/ information, legal assistance. The numerous studies, diagnostics, and audits carried

out by the ODCO have shown that craft cooperative, like the others, experience difficulties related to their start-up in general during the first two years of their activities. In order to remedy this situation, the Mourafaka program was initiated by the ODCO and the Ministry of Supervision. This is a support program for newly created cooperatives (with less than two years of legal existence and at least one year of activity) which are generally the most confronted with the problem of starting their activity and its sustainability. This program lasts more than nine years (2011-2020) has trained 4,000 cooperatives in all sectors at a rate of 500 per year, offers strategic diagnostic services (training needs of managers of cooperatives, technical assistance in commercial promotion), group training of managers (capacity building of managers in the governance of cooperatives) and individual coaching (supporting cooperatives in implementing their development plans). These cooperatives were considered eligible for the mourafaka program, as they met the criteria for selecting beneficiaries, in particular projects that valued local resources, as part of the development of a promising sector, supported by young graduates and women, with funding from national programs such as the INDH (National Initiative for Human Development) and the ADS (Social Development Agency). These measures would help to ensure the continuity of cooperatives after incorporation and their openness to development as economic and social projects. Although it is too early to conclude the implementation of this program, the initial contacts that have been made with the boards of directors of the targeted cooperatives to establish the roadmap that the cooperative uses to succeed in its support program, are very encouraging.

### Research Objectives

The purpose of this article is to identify the various through the methods described before questioning their possible influences on the management system. This object can be translated into three questions major:

- Can a significant positive link be found between some of the training policies and cooperative performance?
- Can we deduce causal relationships between these training policies and the performance?

### Research Methodology and Data Analysis

To answer these questions, this study was conducted with 30 co-operatives In Morocco. This is a qualitative study through semi-directive interviews with managers and presidents of cooperatives as seen on this table (Table 1):

**Table 1: Data Sheet of the Cooperatives Studied**

Cooperatives	Nombre d'adhérents	Zone d'implantation
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Cooperative 1	17	Marrakech
Cooperative 2	200	Rabat
Cooperative 3	30	Ouezzane
Cooperative 4	42	Tanger
Cooperative 5	100	Chaouen
Cooperative 6	15	Errachidia
Cooperative 7	120	Zagora
Cooperative 8	220	Ouezzane
Cooperative 9	45	Beni Mellal
Cooperative 10	10	Tetouan
Cooperative 11	22	Sidi Kacem
Cooperative 12	35	Sidi Slimane
Cooperative 13	47	Kenitra
Cooperative 14	89	Rabat
Cooperative 15	45	Ouezzane
Cooperative 16	20	Sidi Kacem
Cooperative 17	100	El Houceima
Cooperative 18	22	Ouezzane
Cooperative 19	13	Chaouen
Cooperative 20	45	Chaouen
Cooperative 21	118	Kenitra
Cooperative 22	67	Sidi Kacem
Cooperative 23	90	Sidi Kacem
Cooperative 24	82	Fès
Cooperative 25	14	Sidi Slimane
Cooperative 26	16	Ouezzane
Cooperative 27	30	Sidi Slimane
Cooperative 28	26	Meknès
Cooperative 29	70	Zagora
Cooperative 30	130	Rabat

#### 4. RESULTS

The analysis focuses first on the attitudes of cooperatives towards training and the content of their training policy. The various cooperatives studied do not all demonstrate the same dynamism or rigor in their actions. To better understand these different attitudes, 8 variables reflect this training policy were selected:

- existence of a training plan;
- contributions to a training fund;
- the person who manages the training in the cooperative;
- training projects are set up;
- number of people involved in training;
- existence of more specific formations;
- opinion on the training offered by the accompanying state programs;
- Degree of learning in these trainings.

The data from this research was based on an exploratory qualitative study. It were collected through interviews. This approach was chosen because of the sensitive nature of most issues. They were collected over a period of six months, due to the travel required to reach most of the exhibition fairs. All coops were contacted directly, interviews ranged from 60 to 90 minutes, with an average duration of approximately 70 minutes. They identified the following results:

- 1) A positive relationship between cooperative development and training engineering;
- 2) Cooperative development influences the training process. Thus, the inverse causality was justified.
- 3) Training engineering is the cornerstone of cooperative development internally and externally;

## DISCUSSION

The results of this research were of great surprise, the cooperators presented their greed to learn and self develop and have unanimously presented their satisfaction with the support and training programs carried out by the public authorities . However, it has been found that almost 80% do not have a training plan or a specific person who takes care of it based solely on the state training plan, believing that the lack of resources hinders them while they generate turnover considerably. Moreover, illiteracy remains a pervasive problem within cooperatives, the lack of structure and division of tasks also has a negative influence on the training process. On the other hand, many co-operatives learn instantly without planning it and only when necessary, especially for the technical side, but this approach has advantages as well as disadvantages. In terms of benefits, it is less expensive, sometimes free, performed by a parent or friend or family member, but only a few people benefit from it, which monopolizes learning and goes against cooperative principles.

Evaluation of the quality of a training system cannot be limited to a socio-economic approach. Although the use of the concepts of effectiveness, efficiency and equity is not questionable, it does not allow for an accurate account of all the components that are implemented within the training systems. Moreover, the high illiteracy rate among cooperatives seriously hinders the effectiveness and impact of training engineering within Moroccan cooperatives. In this sense, it can be said that young people who leave the school system without qualifications do not pose problems to the school system, or even to the social system, but that they pose problems to the school or training system and the social system. An external evaluation by or for the organization funding the initiative can certainly be an element that allows training to improve and promote better results. It seems to us therefore necessary, not to say indispensable, to deepen the reflection in order to determine which indicators and which method could be used to evaluate the pedagogical dimension of the training systems, on the balance between the different aspects of knowledge and their conative dimension which makes it possible to take into account the level at which education or training is committed to learning.

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