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RESEARCH ARTICLE

REPRESENTATION OF EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP: CASE OF WOMEN IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study is to measure women's perceptions of women's empowerment strategies by promoting women's entrepreneurship in Côte d'Ivoire. It is the result of a quantitative study conducted with a sample of 380 women divided according to the quota method. The analysis of the data shows that the entrepreneurial impulse of women stumbles on sociocultural and structural constraints. At the level of socio-cultural barriers, their perceptions of the company, their different roles in society, their levels of education and the perception of the very management of activities by their family members or their communities are crucial in the success of their activities. Structurally, women's entrepreneurial initiatives are hindered by (i) lack of information on the financing procedures of banking institutions, (ii) ignorance of formalization procedures or statements by companies, (iii) low motivation in the desire to formalize or declare his business among women, (iv) the lack of follow-up of women by the rulers, and (v) the national communication strategy on inappropriate female entrepreneurship. In order to stimulate the entrepreneurial dynamic among women, it is up to the various actors not to underestimate the importance of the socio-cultural dimension in the communication on women's entrepreneurship and to organize regular awareness-raising activities. Training in the field of women's entrepreneurship.

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INTRODUCTION

The empowerment of women is one of the essential challenges of all policies aimed at gender-sensitive development (SDG5). In the priorities of the national employment policy 2015-2020, the State of Côte d'Ivoire plans to promote decent jobs for women, young people and people with disabilities. It therefore plans to compensate for the modest absorptive capacity of the modern sector by supporting self-employment through the availability, for example, of lines of credit at the level of microfinance institutions (MEPS, 2015). In Côte d'Ivoire, the population of working age is made up of 51.4% men and 48.6% women, and resides mainly in rural areas (53.5%) compared to 25.1% in other cities and 21.4% in Abidjan. In addition, the analysis of poverty taking into account the gender issue indicates that the phenomenon affects more women (47.4%) than men (45.5%). unemployment affects women

more (10%) than men (4.8%) (OECD, 2017). The main sources of employment for women in Côte d'Ivoire are non-agricultural self-employment and agricultural self-employment. These two types of employment represent 87.3% of jobs held by women, including 45.4% for self-employed agricultural jobs and 41.9% for self-employed non-agricultural jobs held by women (BM, 2017).

In addition, the vulnerable employment rate is 78.9% for women compared to 64% for men (UNDP, 2017). Only 27% of companies are owned by women despite representing 60% of workers (APA, 2019). Most entrepreneurial activities initiated by women remain in the informal sector. How do women in Côte d'Ivoire see empowerment through the promotion of entrepreneurship?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Determination of sample size: The formula used to calculate the sample size is as follows:

$$n = k^2 * \frac{p * (1 - p)}{\varepsilon^2 + k^2 * \frac{p * (1 - p)}{N}}$$

- k = the quantile of order ;
- $\alpha=5\%$ of the normal distribution ;
- N= Total population (women) of the 5 cities ;
- p = the proportion of women in employment ;
- ε = the confidence threshold ;
- n= The sample size.

We have

k=1.96; N=3384006; p= 0.6090652 and we get $\varepsilon=0.0509$

The calculations give us n= 353 individuals

Allocation of the sample: The construction of the sample structure was done according to the non-probabilistic method of quotas. The variables used to make the quotas are the cities of Abidjan, Yamoussoukro, Bouake, San Pedro and Korhogo. The choice of these cities is justified by the fact that they are engines of economic growth, and also by the fact that they are part of the three types of cities that characterize the Ivorian territory (Madio, Coulbaly, 2016). Indeed, as noted by the World Bank, three types of cities mesh the Ivorian territory: (i) large cities, such as Abidjan, San Pedro and Yamoussoukro (called global connectors), have strong economic potential, offer an environment conducive to innovation; (ii) regional cities (or regional connectors) essential for trade, linking the major cities of West Africa (such as Lagos, Accra, Ouagadougou and Monrovia) by road and rail transport corridors. These include Bouake and Korhogo; (iii) finally, small towns (or local connectors) concentrate the bulk of agricultural production. Thus, we obtained the following quotas per city for our sample

Table 1. Structure of the survey sample

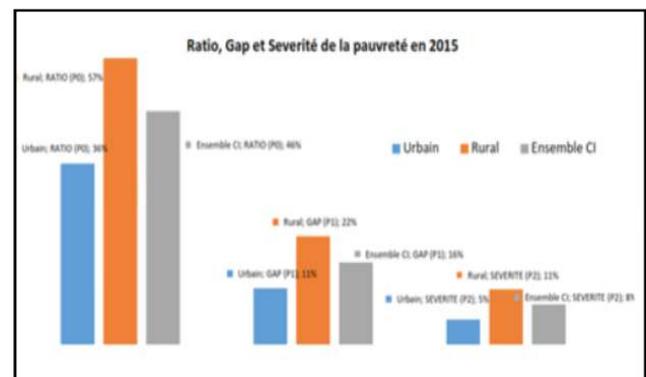
CITIES	WEIGHT	NUMBERS
ABIDJAN	0.4645892	164
BOUAKE	0.1189802	42
KORHOGO	0.1048159	37
SAN PEDRO	0.1898017	67
YAMO USSOUKRO	0.1218130	43

The material and methodological aspects being developed, it seems appropriate to take stock of the situation of women's entrepreneurship in Côte d'Ivoire.

Situation of women's entrepreneurship in Côte d'Ivoire:

The empowerment of women requires initiatives aimed at giving them more dignity and making them more autonomous. One of the axes of this empowerment is entrepreneurship. The current situation in the world indicates that 22% of the productive potential of men is underutilized in the world. This figure is 50% for women (OIT, 2013). Entrepreneurship therefore brings added value to the economy because it facilitates exchanges between agents. It is important to emphasize that the creation of new businesses plays a

fundamental role in economic growth. Entrepreneurship increases competition, which contributes to the revitalization of the economy. The immediate consequence of this competition is innovation, as fledgling companies come to market with new concepts, pushing existing ones to step out of their comfort zone and come up with new offerings. According to the ILO, the promotion of female entrepreneurship and gender equality contributes to the creation of jobs and the empowerment of women in their families and within their communities. (OIT, 2019). The employment policy was part of the strategies for combating poverty and for the inclusion of marginalized social groups, women, young people and people with disabilities. In Côte d'Ivoire, the working-age population is made up of people aged 14 and over. It is estimated at 14,870,704 or a proportion of 62.8% of the total population. It is relatively young (63.0%) with an age varying between 14 and 35 years and resides mainly in urban areas (52.8%). Data disaggregated by gender show a relative under-representation of women (49.5%) compared to men (50.5%). Women (3.5%) are more affected by unemployment than men (2.3%) (INS, 2016). The poverty profile in Côte d'Ivoire shows that poverty affects women more (47.4% of them are poor) than men (45.5% of men are poor) even if the latter contribute slightly more poverty (50.6% of the poor are men) and especially in Abidjan where 51.3% of the poor are men.



Sources : enquête envi 2015

Figure 1. Main poverty indicators in 2015

Admittedly, overall poverty is on the decline. It fell from 46.3% in 2015 to 39.4% in 2020 (BM, 2020). This decline is limited to urban areas; the number of poor having increased in rural areas over the same period (+2.4%). However, with Covid 19, the incomes of the poorest populations fell by 30% and 1.37 million households (45.2%) of Ivorian households fell below the poverty line. (UNDP, 2021). To ensure equitable sustainable development within societies, the involvement of all segments of society is essential. The study of the employment situation reveals a higher preference for self-employment among women. 21.4% of men versus 14.6% of women prefer a job in the public sector. While 62.2% against 45.3% of men prefer self-employment. This preference is based mainly on the desire to earn more money (43%) and the wish to be one's own boss. It is clear that the entrepreneurial potential is more pronounced in women than in men. But the study of entrepreneurial incentives in Côte d'Ivoire leans more in favor of men than women. Especially since

“70% of women-owned SMEs in developing countries are excluded from financial institutions or are unable to receive financial services on adequate terms to meet their needs” (WB, 2018).

Table 2. Reasons for preference for self-employment

	Tous	Par genre		Par zone de résidence		
		Hommes	Femmes	Abidjan	Autre urbain	Rural
Espère gagner plus	43,2	42,0	44,2	33,9	40,7	45,9
Souhaite être son propre patron	37,0	39,9	34,6	42,3	38,3	35,5
Souhaite occuper un emploi intéressant	6,2	6,6	6,0	3,6	6,2	6,8
Flexibilité des heures de travail	4,0	2,8	5,0	7,7	3,6	3,4
Ne pense pas pouvoir trouver un travail salarié de qualité	3,2	2,9	3,5	4,6	3,2	2,9
Autres raisons	6,3	5,9	6,7	7,9	8,0	5,3
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: BM, 2017, 108

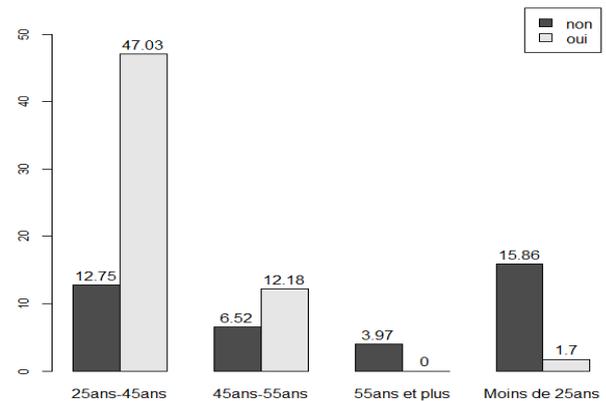
In addition, independent agricultural employment occupies 47.5% of the population with 49.3% of men against 45.4% of women. This type of employment is more concentrated in rural areas (72.6%) where 74.8% are men and 69.8% women. In urban areas, this type of job occupies only 8.1% of the population (BM, 2017). Female employment represents 38.6% of jobs (INS, 2015). Non-agricultural self-employment and agricultural self-employment are the main sources of employment for women in Côte d'Ivoire. These two types of employment represent 87.3% of jobs held by women, including 45.4% for agricultural self-employment and 41.9% for non-agricultural self-employment of jobs held by women (BM, 2017). Overall, employment in Côte d'Ivoire (INS, 2016) is almost exclusively informal (93.6%) regardless of the socio-demographic characteristic considered, with the exception of workers with a higher level of education (52.8 %). According to the ILO, this sector provides 82% of non-agricultural employment in South Asia, 66% in Sub-Saharan Africa, 65% in East and Southeast Asia excluding China, 51% in Latin America and 10% in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In Côte d'Ivoire, only 27% of companies are owned by women despite representing 60% of workers (APA, 2018). The vulnerable employment rate is 78.9% for women compared to 64% for men (PNUD, 2017). The situation of women in the labor market, for its part, is characterized by: (i) the high unemployment rate of women, young people and persons with disabilities in the labor market; (ii) the difficulties of access to decent employment for vulnerable groups such as women, young graduates and school dropouts, the disabled, the long-term unemployed; (iii) the problem of reintegration and reintegration of ex-combatants, among whom there are many young people; (iv) the absence of specific programs for women, young people and people with disabilities (MEPS, 2015, 40). Consequently, it is easy to see that the income gap in non-agricultural self-employment is even higher with a level three times lower than that of men (36,300 against 98,306). The trend is the same from the point of view of job quality. If we consider permanent employment, 51.5% of women occupy it compared to 62% for men. And when it comes to part-time employment, they occupy up to 13.2% against 9.2% for men. Compared to the minimum wage, 41.7% of women have a salary below the minimum wage, while this rate is 27.9 for men. The gap widened in 2014 since in 2012, the proportions were 62.4% and 55.3%.

The National Employment Policy 2016-2020 therefore plans to support self-employment. It is a matter of compensating for the modest absorption capacity of the modern sector by supporting self-employment through the availability of lines of credit at the level of microfinance institutions. In the sense of promoting decent jobs, it is planned in the second axis priority of the PNE to "promote decent jobs for young men and women, in particular through business creation and vocational training" (MEPS, 2017, 35). the implementation of numerous projects and/or programs to (i) rehabilitate vocational training

infrastructures, (ii) integrate young people, (iii) reintegrate ex-combatants, (iv) initiate income-generating activities, (v) supporting social dialogue, (vi) etc. It emerges from the analysis that the state of Côte d'Ivoire has made entrepreneurship the lever for promoting the empowerment of Ivorian women. What is the perception of entrepreneurship by women in Côte d'Ivoire?

RESULTS

Age, marital status and job search: According to our study, 60.91% of the women interviewed who are employed are between 25 and 45 years old.

Situation d'emploi des femmes

For these women in general and in particular for those aged between 25 and 45, having a job represents a great opportunity for self-fulfilment. This allows you to be independent and to have an activity appreciated by all. For some,

"This is what allows us to survive and meet our needs". For others "it's having money to take care of your family".

Marital status is a significant factor in explaining women's entrepreneurial motivation. In fact, the survey proved that 51.58% of single women who are in employment are self-employed. This finding contrasts with that of married women who represent 33.33% of women who are not their own account. Similarly, we see from Table 1 that women who are not self-employed are either married (80.00%) or widowed (87.50%), except single women and those in common-law unions show a considerable rate of self-employed women. We can deduce from this that the more the woman is single, divorced or in a free union, the more she exercises a job on her own account. The chi2 test allows us to state with a high level of certainty that chance alone could not explain such a relationship between marital status and self-employment. These various findings corroborate the thesis that socio-demographic characteristics, in particular age and marital status, have a positive impact on becoming self-employed (TREMBLAY, GNIN 2008).

Female entrepreneurship depends on the number of years of experience: The survey made it possible to assess the level of entrepreneurial culture of female respondents. It tells us that among them, 58.07% are not self-employed, against 41.93% who are. The statistics also show that more than half of the women surveyed who have more than a year's professional experience are self-employed.

Table 3. Employment situation according to marital status

		Marital status				
		Single	Divorced	Married	Libre Union	Widow
Are you installed on your own account?	NO	37.97	50	80	51.92	87.5
	Yes	62.03	50	20	48.08	12.5

Table 4. Duration of exercise of the activity

		How long have you been doing this activity?			
		11years old-20years od	1 year old-10 years old	21 years old-30years old	Less than 1 year
How long have you been doing this activity?	No	40.91	21.26	0	90
	Yes	59.09	78.74	100	10

Only those with professional experience of less than a year do not respect this rule. In fact, 100% of respondents who have professional experience between 21 and 30 years are self-employed, 78.74% and 59.09% of those who have professional experience between 1 and 10 years and 11 and 20 years are also self-employed. . 90.00% of people who have professional experience of less than one year are not self-employed. In short, the higher the number of years spent in activity, the more the woman is self-employed. What is the influence of the environment on female entrepreneurial motivation?

Influences the socio-cultural and geographical sphere on the entrepreneurial potential of women: The environment in which the individual lives plays an important role in the transmission or inhibition of entrepreneurial values. There can be several environments: the family, the school, society, the regions... Each of these environments exerts in one way or another impacts on the individuals who make up society. Also, the theories of social processes assume that social influence is based on the perceptions that individuals have of the attitudes and behaviors of the members of their social networks. In particular, individuals' perceptions that many people in their network act in a certain way (descriptive norms) and that those people who are part of their networks expect them to act the same way (injunctive norms). Norms become the expectation that one should act in a certain way while believing that there will be social sanctions if one does not. Descriptive standards correspond to expectations of how one should act. The survey showed that the family is one of the most important environments that convey entrepreneurial culture. In the sense that 69.97% of the women questioned are in favor of the integration of their children through self-employment.

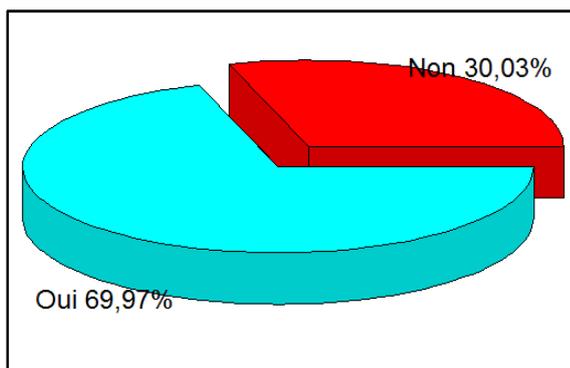


Figure 2. Integration of children through self-employment

This category of women (favorable to the integration of their child through self-employment) is essentially made up of women who work on their own account (77.45%). Only 22.55% are not self-employed. As for the women who expressed a contrary opinion (who are not in favor of the integration of their child through self-employment), 56.41% do not exercise on their own account against 43.59% who are installed on their own account. The chi-square test confirms at the 5% level that there is indeed a correlation between the entrepreneurial situation of the parents and the professional integration path of the children (see appendix). These facts show that the children of entrepreneurs are more likely to become entrepreneurs later on. Entrepreneur parents are role models for children. In addition, it appeared that the entourage plays a very important role in the field of female entrepreneurship. Indeed, 95.75% of women claim to have an entourage favorable to the idea of entrepreneurship, and 98.80% of people who are ready to be self-employers have their entourage who have a positive opinion on self-employment.

It emerges from the analysis that the entrepreneurial momentum of women comes up against socio-cultural obstacles. Their perceptions of the business, their different roles within society, their levels of education and even management of IGAs by members of their families or their communities are decisive in the success of their activities. In the continuity of their traditional role of social reproduction, women's income from their entrepreneurial activities is allocated to health care, shopping, fuel supply, domestic chores, meal preparation, etc. In addition, in order to preserve family or community harmony, they grant special treatment to their clients from their families. They tend to make gifts or provide unpaid services to members of their communities. As a result, these community pressures can contribute to the failure of women's activities. In addition to the family and the entourage, the territory can also influence individuals. People living near a center of economic attraction are more inclined to create a business than others living in less dynamic regions or territories. The survey showed that 73.02% of women from global connectors are in employment, i.e. 40.47% in Abidjan and 16.28% in San Pedro and Yamoussoukro, these women are for the vast majority traders. who work on their own account and have an environment favorable to the practice of self-employment. As for the regional connectors (Korhogo and Bouaké) 26.98% are in employment (i.e. 17.21% in Bouaké and 09.77% in Korhogo).

The influence of socio-cultural constraints on entrepreneurial capacities that emerges from the survey corroborates the observation made in the 2016-2020 national employment policy document in these terms:

"Confronted with the ethno cultural constraints which constitute the main barriers to their full political and economic emancipation, the political will to respect Gender must be translated into the national employment policy by initiatives that bring about more significant transformations in favor of gender equality in the market. work. » (MEPS, 2017, 8).

From the point of view of women, what is the impact of the promotion of women's entrepreneurship on the entrepreneurial dynamics of women in Côte d'Ivoire?

DISCUSSION

Impact on knowledge of business formalization procedures: The communication made on the formalization of businesses managed by women is little appreciated by the women surveyed, they judge the national communication system linked to the formalization of businesses managed by women to be ineffective at 70.91%. It is in this sense that 70.61% of women think that this lack of communication is the basis of their ignorance of the procedures for formalizing their business. Moreover, the survey revealed that women know very little about business formalization/declaration procedures. More than half of the women surveyed (63.61) find the level of communication of the structures responsible for promoting female entrepreneurship insufficient. This feeling is shared by 26.39% of women who say that the level of communication of these structures is passable. Only 10.00% of the women surveyed think that this level of communication is good enough. The level of communication of the structures in charge of the promotion of women's entrepreneurship will have succeeded on the part of 90.00% of the women questioned with a score below average. More than one in three women surveyed (68.41%) have not yet heard of business formalization/declaration.

This weakness in communication is reflected in the various definitions they give to the notion of a company's declaration. For 40.76% of them, declaring your company means making it a "public company". When, 36.55% say that declaring your company means "making your company official in the acts of the State". It is even for the definition of tax law and labor law, which according to them have no connection with the declaration of a company. Only 05.04% and 04.20% think that declaring a business means assuming these social obligations and paying the taxes. Like the company declaration, the formalization of the company also remains a term unknown to most of the women interviewed. 74.15% of them claim not to be aware of the procedures to formalize their business against 25.85% who say the opposite. The formalization procedures described by these women are for the most part financial procedures. It is in this sense that 36.78% described them as banking formalities. The others confuse them either with legal formalities (32.18%), or with commercial and social formalities (17.24%).

Impact on knowledge of women's entrepreneurship support structures: The survey showed that 90.50% of the

women surveyed do not know of any government structure in charge of supervising women's entrepreneurship. Only 09.50% are aware of these structures. They cite as supervisory structures: AGEPE, AEJ, FAFCI, Women enterprising, fund dedicated to women and association of women traders. Like government structures, women's associations/cooperatives are less frequented by the women surveyed, 67.27% claim to belong to no women's association or cooperative. Women who belong to associations/cooperatives (32.76%) are organizations that vary from a simple group of people sharing the same environment (district), to an association or cooperative bringing together individuals with the same socio-professional situation.

By way of example, they cite: female leaders of Bondoukou, the united and supportive sisters of Korhogo, association of girls in the lake district, Association of nationals of Bouake in Abidjan, Association of market traders, Group of fishermen, Association of women neighborhood. In the absence of supervisory structures, for their information needs, they testify that it is the various associations/cooperatives that most often provide information, training and awareness-raising for members. 38.76% affirm that they participate (associations/cooperatives) in information, training and awareness-raising. 26.36% say they inform, train, raise awareness and finance and 16.28% say they inform and raise awareness. As a result, women seeking funding most often (in 50.22% of cases) resort to funding from someone they know or 40.44% use their own means. Recourse to financing from a banking institution is the path least followed by women (09.33%). 30.00% of women who followed this path were informed by those around them (family or professional) and by the media.

Generally, the survey observed a low motivation of women to formalize or declare their businesses. In fact, 91.12% of women do not carry out investigations in order to collect information to formalize their business against only 08.88% indulging in this type of approach. But this does not inhibit the desire to formalize their women's activities. Since, 59.68% of women think of formalizing their businesses against 40.32% who think the opposite. The suggestions made to the government by the women interviewed, in order to better promote the entrepreneurship of Ivorian women, are, in 36.11% of cases, the creation of structures for the promotion of women entrepreneurs. 21.67% of women propose the creation of supervisory structures. 19.44% of women suggest the creation of a local radio station and 15.56% suggest developing communication activities for the benefit of women. Only 03.33% and 03.89% offer open days and the creation of guides for women entrepreneurs. However, nearly half of the women (46.09%) want this communication to be done by television, 25.51% by ICT, 19.42% by radio and 06.96% by the press.

CONCLUSION

Access to the public work space for women through entrepreneurial initiatives is compromised by the persistence of gender stereotypes linked to the traditional function of social reproduction. Especially since in order to preserve family or community harmony, the resources from the activities are allocated to the maintenance of the family. This contributes to weakening its financial surface and leading the activity to bankruptcy.

In addition, the survey reveals that women have little knowledge of formalization procedures, structures that are responsible for female entrepreneurship and the benefits of formal entrepreneurship. It therefore seems essential to mobilize support networks for the creation of innovative businesses and to set up mentoring structures for female entrepreneurship candidates and self-entrepreneurs. To develop entrepreneurial initiatives among future female entrepreneurs, decision-makers will have to strengthen their communication strategies relating to female entrepreneurship by regularly organizing awareness-raising and training in the field of female entrepreneurship

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