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AUTHOR(S)	Ketfi Soltana, Nedjla Gherabi
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ALGERIAN RURAL WOMEN'S ACCESS TO THE WORLD OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO ATTAIN SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

KETFI Soltana

Institute of Urban Techniques' Management, University of Constantine 3

Nedjla Gherabi

Institute of Urban Techniques' Management, University of Oum El Bouaghi

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to highlight the importance of Algerian rural women's access to the world of entrepreneurship together with its role in attaining sustainable rural development. In fact, the access of rural women to the field of entrepreneurship has shown to be of the essence to attain progress and development in rural areas, as Algeria has paid great attention to rural women through developing several policies for Rural Renewal and Rural Development, in addition to the embodiment of more than a few national programs for their promotion all the way through the policy of encouraging innovation and self-employment pursued by the State, by means of developing mechanisms and adopting national programs with an economic and social dimension aimed at the category of young men, both male and female, based on the provision of facilities and incentives by proffering financial support, guidance, training and accompaniment for creation purpose of mini-projects and start-ups, along with encouraging rural women with a project to access to the entrepreneurship world.

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Introduction.

In actual fact, entrepreneurship has become an important option for both developing and developed countries at present, given the role and characteristics thereof in building competencies, individual and university initiatives, mobilizing resources, regardless of their volume, type and geographical spread, within the scope of adapting to current data and existing challenges, in addition to the State's commitments a propos the attainment of development goals and the eradication of poverty. In this respect, Algeria has paid great attention to rural women through various policies for Rural Renewal and Rural Development, together with enhancing their role in the national production pathway, as promotion and empowerment thereof stand for such a goal that receives special attention from the government; nonetheless, this goal can be realized by enabling this social category to attain its economic independence, create job positions and contribute to the national economy, as this can be reached through the development of a new vision and effective measures that take into account in order to stimulate the dynamism of establishing economic activities and mini-enterprises, the development of women's entrepreneurship together with the involvement thereof in the dynamics of development and the embodiment of the national plan for the promotion of women in general and rural women in particular. How rural women entrepreneurs contribute to sustainable rural development? What are the challenges facing rural women and hindering them in their contribution to development?

1. Importance of Algerian rural women's access to the entrepreneurship world.

In fact, Algerian rural women are considered one of the most important pillars of sustainable rural development in the country; as consequence, their access to the entrepreneurship world is of great importance. Besides, the enablement of rural women to access the field of entrepreneurship contributes to the attainment of comprehensive and sustainable development in rural communities, whereat these women endeavour to improve their economic and social living conditions and achieve gender balance. In addition, rural women's access to the entrepreneurship world does contribute to the creation of new and diverse job opportunities in rural areas, the fact of which leads to improving the local economy and reducing poverty and unemployment rates in those areas.

2. Objectives of the study.

Positively, the desired aim of this study is to explore and analyze the importance of access of the Algerian rural women to the world of entrepreneurship for attainment purpose of sustainable rural development. As for the objectives hereto, they are traced to understand the role of rural women in rural development and their impact on attaining sustainable development, in addition to analyzing the challenges and opportunities facing rural women in accessing the world of entrepreneurship. Likewise, this study seeks to categorize tools and ways that can be employed to empower rural women and enable them to access to the field of entrepreneurship, in respect such as education, vocational training, financial support and infrastructure development in rural areas. More and more, the study aims to keep under surveillance a typical case of successful rural women in entrepreneurship to comprehend the success factors and challenges they faced, and analyze the impact of their success in motivating more women to access to the field of entrepreneurship.

3. The role of Algerian rural women in rural development.

Indeed, Algerian rural women play a crucial role in rural development as they contribute to improving the living and economic conditions of rural communities. Moreover, rural women face loads of challenges in the current situation, including social, economic and legal challenges. Nevertheless, they have a significant impact on attaining sustainable development in the countryside. More to the point, rural women contribute to strengthening the local economy and providing employment opportunities, and stimulating the local market and better distributing wealth, as well. In addition, they play an important role in preserving heritage and local culture, promoting local governance and participating in decision-making. As consequence, with the aim of continuation to attain sustainable rural development, rural women must overcome the challenges they face and obtain the necessary support and opportunities to be had for them so as to access the entrepreneurial world.

4. The concept of entrepreneurship and its constituents.

In fact, the concept of entrepreneurship emerged through a phased approach, which consists of a set of successive stages starting from a person having entrepreneurial tendencies until he adopts such behaviour. However, these stages are intermediate in the decision-making stage to access to the entrepreneurship field, which latter is preceded by a stage called entrepreneurial orientation, as it is defined as individual will and intellectual readiness that turns into the creation of an enterprise under certain conditions. Prior to providing definition of the entrepreneurship concept, we shall first address the entrepreneur concept.

4.1. Definition of Entrepreneur.

Occasionally, the word "Entrepreneur" refers to the word "Leader", from entrepreneurship which originally stands for the investment of opportunities and the search for profit. Above and beyond, it has alike been associated with human abilities to create and regenerate.

According to "R. Cantillon", the entrepreneur is a person who risks his own or borrowed funds employed under the condition of uncertainty without – guarantees – of making profits from the sale or returns of production factors that would cover the costs of production factors, thereby assuming various types of risks, either financial or non-financial, public or private systemic. (Boutillier et uzunidis, 1999: 58).

Additionally, J.A. Schumpeter contributed in bringing to light the pivotal role played by the entrepreneur in the organization, and illustrated the importance of varying the use of inputs and resources of the organization; i.e., the search for adapting the measure to the change in the exploitation of resources

with the need to exploit the available opportunities. However, according to Schumpeter, the entrepreneur is a creative person with the ability and desire to change the use of its available resources, whereat the process of change in small and medium-sized enterprises differs from large enterprises for different possibilities, resulting in new innovations through either making a new product, pursuing innovative ways in production, discovering new outlets for distribution or marketing products and finding new sources of raw materials (Boutillier et uzunidis,1999: 59).

As consequence, an entrepreneur is a creative and innovative person who has the ability and desire to invest in his available resources and in his own ideas; likewise, he stands for the risker and adventurer with his own or borrowed funds without guarantees of making profits, thus assuming various types of risks, either financial or other.

4.2. Definition of Entrepreneurship.

In actual fact, Entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon that requires specific financial, technical and human characteristics, in particular with regards to composition, accompaniment, structures and the like. Further, these conditions represent the main pillars that contribute to the acquisition of entrepreneurial spirit, Initiative, a good understanding of the risks and opportunities available. (Bidar and Bishar, 2010: 45)

Nevertheless, according to Venkataraman, Entrepreneurship represents a series of stages in which opportunities for creating future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited. (Lavolette et loue, 2006: 4)

More to the point, Casson defines the Entrepreneurship as market conditions, new products, services, raw materials or organizational methods that exploits and sells at a price higher than the cost of their production. (Casson, 1982: 364)

In light of which, Entrepreneurship stands for:

- The creation of a new enterprise that is looking to exploit opportunities and which is characterized by creativity, search for change and embodiment of promising ideas on the ground, which is often characterized by uncertainty, hence the need to take risks arises.
- The ability to pay attention to opportunities whereat others observe chaos and contradictions only.
- The ability to discover, collect and control sources of resources.

4.3. Constituents of the Entrepreneurial thought.

In reality, the entrepreneur needs a set of specifications that make him a successful entrepreneur and an effective manager, through combining a set of personal qualities and environmental factors. In virtue of which, such constituents can be divided into two types.

4.3.1. Personal constituents: which include.

- **Need for achievement:** which means endeavouring to attain goals, assuming responsibility and working on innovation, continuous development and differentiation.
- **Self-confidence:** which means self-reliance, individual potentials, ability to think and manage, make decisions to solve problems, face future challenges, self-confidence and reassurance.
- **Future vision:** it is means to look to the future with an optimistic outlook, the possibility of achieving a privileged position and increasing levels of profitability.
- **Sacrifice and perseverance:** contractors believe that attaining success and ensuring its continuity can be achieved through perseverance, patience and sacrifice, as this can be made through hard work, diligence and contribution.
- **Desire for autonomy:** constantly striving to create independent projects that are not related to the partnership, mainly when they have sufficient financial resources, as entrepreneurs exclude work with others to avoid scaling situations, so that they can express and embody the real ideas, opinions and ambitions; the fact of which gives them independence at work.

4.3.2. Environmental constituents: which include.

- **Social environment:** such a social environment is an important element in the strong movement towards the creation of the enterprise due to its complex structure.

- **Family:** it works to develop the entrepreneurial abilities of its children, as it endeavours them to adopt the creation of enterprises in order to build a career, mainly if these parents have previous experience, or own private projects (in respect such as crafts, factories, and the like). However, this can be completed by indoctrinating and encouraging children from a young age to learn some professional activities and assume simple responsibilities.
- **Religion:** the true Islamic religion calls for confident and sincere work, as well as self-reliance in obtaining various sources of livelihood, without relying on others, or living intrusively in society.
- **Customs and traditions:** they are considered one of the factors influencing the trend towards the creation of enterprises. Besides, Bedouin communities practice agriculture and herding with their children, whilst they inherited traditional industries and commercial activities by generations from forefathers. Furthermore, popular proverbs circulating among people are often a powerful incentive to work and instil a spirit of perseverance, creativity and diligence in the souls of young people by their adult relatives.
- A process of transforming opportunities into successful projects, through initiative, innovation and risk taking.

5. Definition of rural entrepreneurship.

Unquestionably, the rural entrepreneurship is the process of creating and developing economic projects in rural areas, whose aim is to benefit from local resources, create new job opportunities, and improve the standard of living of the rural population.

5.1. Difference between Entrepreneurship and Rural Entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship differs from Rural Entrepreneurship in the elements illustrated hereunder in Table 1.

Table 1. Difference between Entrepreneurship and Rural Entrepreneurship.

Rural Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship	Standard
Focus on the needs of the rural community	Innovation and rapid growth	Focus
Rural areas only	Urban areas and rural areas	Location
Difficulties in obtaining finance	Easier obtaining of finance	Finance
Mainly domestic markets	Local and international markets	Markets
Weak infrastructure	Good infrastructure	Infrastructure
Difficulties in accessing training opportunities	Greater possibilities for developing skills	Skills and training
Limited support programs	Available support programs	Government support
High risks, socio-cultural difficulties, lack of services	High risk, great competition	Challenges
Take advantage of local resources, making social impact	Access to global markets, potential for rapid growth	Opportunities

Source: Prepared by the two researchers.

5.2. Importance of Rural Entrepreneurship.

- **Fighting poverty and unemployment:** through creating new job opportunities for young people and women in rural areas.
- **Developing local economy:** through supporting small and medium-sized projects, together with encouraging investment in rural sectors.

- **Improving the population's standard of living:** though providing basic services, improving infrastructure, promoting social integration.
- **Preserving environment:** through promoting sustainable agricultural practices, and using renewable energy.

6. Rural women and entrepreneurial.

6.1. Rural women: women who live in rural areas and work in various fields, in respect such as agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, trade and others.

6.2. Definition of rural women entrepreneurship. Rural women entrepreneurship is one of the most important factors contributing to the attainment of development in Algeria, owing to its important role in improving the standard of living of rural women, creating new job opportunities, and enhancing women's participation in the national economy.

6.3. Role of rural women in entrepreneurship and contribution to sustainable rural development. Rural women play a pivotal role in entrepreneurship in attaining sustainable development through:

6.3.1. Economic empowerment. It contains.

- Improving the standard of living of rural women and their families.
- Achieving the material independence of women.
- Contributing to the development of the national economy.
- Enhancing food security: Rural women contribute to improving food security through their agricultural and animal husbandry projects, the fact of which promotes self-sufficiency in addition to participating in spreading awareness about sustainable agricultural practices, in respect such as organic farming, which preserves the environment and improves the quality of food products.

6.3.2. Job creation: All the way through:

- Providing new job opportunities for women and youth in rural areas.
- Reducing unemployment and poverty.

6.3.3. Social development: This can be realized through:

- Empowering rural women and enhancing their role in society.
- Improving social services in rural areas.
- Fighting the differences between urban and rural areas.

7. Mechanisms of supporting women entrepreneurship in Algeria.

Undeniably, rural women entrepreneurship has received great attention in Algeria in recent years, whereat many measures have been undertaken for support and development thereof, as the State has created devices to support and accompany women's feminist entrepreneurship in general and rural women in particular, as the most important requirements for the success of these enterprises; as these mechanisms do contribute to the creation of jobs and reduction of unemployment. Moreover, in 1994 the Algerian State established the National Unemployment Insurance Fund (CNAC) under the authority of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, whose role is to support projects created by unemployed persons between the ages of 35 and 50, through the provision of financial assistance, tax reduction and privileges to each person who meets the conditions of joining the agency. Subsequently, the National Agency for Youth Support and Employment, now called the

National Agency for the Support and Development of Entrepreneurship (ANADE), was established in 1996, which includes 61 agencies spread all over the country.

8. Analysis of the current situation of rural women in Algeria.

The analysis of the current situation of rural women highlighted strengths and weaknesses.

8.1. Strengths.

- **High level of Education.** Algeria has witnessed a marked improvement in the level of education of rural women over the past decades.
- **Participation in public life.** Participation of rural women in public life has increased, inclusive in elections, social and association activities.
- **Awareness of their rights.** The awareness of rural women in terms of their legal and social rights has increased.
- **Government support.** The Algerian government proffers many programs to support rural women in various fields, in respect such as education, training and finance.
- **Community-based initiatives.** There are many community-based initiatives aimed at empowering rural women and integrating them into development.

8.2. Weaknesses.

- **High illiteracy rate.** The illiteracy rate among rural women is still high compared to men.
- **Unemployment.** Many rural women are unemployed or working in low-paid informal jobs.
- **Access to services.** Rural women face difficulties in accessing basic services, in respect such as education, health and social welfare.
- **Discrimination.** Rural women still face some discrimination in various fields, in respect such as inheritance and participation in decision-making.
- **Violence against women.** Some rural women are subjected to physical or psychological violence.

Table 2. Analysis of the situation of rural women.

Strengths	Weaknesses
High level of Education	High illiteracy rate
Participation in public life	Unemployment
Awareness of their rights	Access to services
Government support	Discrimination
Community initiatives	Violence against women

Source: prepared by the two researchers.

9. Achievements of the experience of Algerian rural women entrepreneurs.

Truly, rural women in Algeria have succeeded in expanding and diversifying their agricultural activity through breaking into, by some of rural women, the field of cereals cultivation, cattle feed, dairy cattle breeding, beekeeping, planting fruit trees and venturing into new plantations, in respect such as saffron cultivation, medicinal plants and cheese making.

Additionally, the Algerian experience in the field of rural women entrepreneurship has attained many achievements, in respect such as:

- **Increase of the number of rural feminist projects.** The number of rural feminist projects has increased from 50 thousand projects in 2010 to more than 200 thousand projects in 2023.
- **New jobs creation.** Rural feminist projects have contributed to the creation of more than 300 thousand new jobs.
- **Improvement of the standard of living of rural women.** Rural feminist projects have contributed to improving the standard of living of rural women and their families.

10. Presentation of the experiences of some rural women entrepreneurs.

10.1. “Khadra” Farm for breeding cows and milk production.

In effect, the owner of the project, Mrs. “Sihem BENDRIA” from Oran, as she started her project in 2018 from achieving success in milk production, whereat she defied all odds and took responsibility to reach her goal, which was attained thanks to the support provided by the State in the field of milk and feeds. Nonetheless, the number of dairy cows did not exceed 30 cows in previous time at her small farm, now it increased to 80 dairy cows and 20 other small cows. Further, her reliance on informatics in managing cattle breeding enabled her to raise milk production, which currently reached 1,300 liters per day that she collects and commercialize directly to the dairy in Es Senia. However, for increasing purpose of milk production with good quality, she is creating small agricultural lands near her farm for planting meadow, ”Sorghum” and hay for feeding cows.

10.2. Packaging agricultural products by Mrs. Linda ACHILI from Oran.

Mrs. Linda ACHILI, who chose to invest in the field of packaging of local agricultural products, where she started at the beginning of her project the packaging of olive oil in a small amount of up to 200 litres, being packaged in a traditional way, has reached and met with great demand from the consumer, the fact of which made her expand this activity to include the packaging of dried figs and couscous made with various types of herbs by rural women hands.

Moreover, thanks to the support provided by the National Agency for the Support and Development of Entrepreneurship, she moved from the traditional to the industrial method using equipment for packaging products, drying couscous and other agricultural products, in respect such as fruits and vegetables. Additionally, Mrs. ACHILI received several configurations at the Chamber of Agriculture of Oran, and is alike seeking to expand her activity by acquiring agricultural land for planting fruit trees.

Conclusion.

In point of fact, Algerian rural women have already proved their ability to enter the world of entrepreneurship and their ability to attain success in the field of entrepreneurship, even in the face of several challenges with the presence of support and assistance, rural women can play an important role in attaining sustainable development in rural areas. In closing, we can say that the access of rural women into the world of entrepreneurship has its own variables that make it a tool for the development of the national economy. As consequence, the Algerian State must redouble its efforts to provide an appropriate climate together with the necessary structures for the success of entrepreneurship for rural women, in addition to its embodiment as an economic indicator that can be adopted in sustainable rural development, and through the generalization of experience to other women in rural areas, as well, all the way through:

- Publishing success stories of rural women in the field of entrepreneurship.
- Providing training, support and assistance to rural women wishing to start their own businesses.
- Promoting cooperation among rural women.

Recommendations.

- **Strengthening coordination between different actors.** The Algerian government should work to strengthen coordination between various actors in the field of supporting and developing rural women entrepreneurs.
- **Spreading awareness about laws and mechanisms.** The Algerian government should work to spread awareness about the laws and mechanisms available to support rural women.
- **Facilitating access to financial services.** The Algerian government should work to facilitate access to financial services for rural women.

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