

# PERCEPTION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR IN THE CAMEROONIAN CONTEXT

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this research is to understand the different perceptions of informal sector entrepreneurs regarding their success in four various domains of activities (trade, health, transport and handicrafts). A qualitative approach based on content analysis is adopted. The multi-site approach was used to highlight specificities through semi-structured interviews. The exploratory study conducted with these twenty entrepreneurs in the city of Douala (Cameroon) made it possible to collect their discourses in relation to the subject. The horizontal and vertical manual analysis also highlighted the multidimensionality of the concept of entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, the content analysis revealed that entrepreneurial success is perceived both objectively and subjectively according to motivations. Also, the results of the study enrich the knowledge on the perception and measurement of entrepreneurial success as well as some strategies used by entrepreneurs in the informal sector. In turn, collective entrepreneurship is suggested for capacity building of actors in the face of certain difficulties related to their activities.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Success, Informal Sector, Entrepreneur, Qualitative Study.

## INTRODUCTION

The setting up of any new activity has an objective for the initiator or the group concerned and refers either to the search for performance, emergence, success appreciated in various aspects. However, a new activity may result in its success or failure. Hence the importance of valuing the start-up phase, which is crucial to the success of an entrepreneurial project (Sammut, 2003). The young entrepreneur then has the ability to create or identify opportunities and exploit them, and even the ability to gather the resources to pursue the opportunity, while at the same time focusing on the individuals who discover, evaluate and exploit them (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). This development of individual activities took off following the economic crisis in the mid-1982s, with the informal sector gaining considerable ground in the Cameroonian economy and occupying an important place in job creation. This quest for gain based on unregulated activities or with a large margin of freedom has been described as informal entrepreneurship (Simen, 2018). These activities, which are sometimes neglected by the literature and some managers, produce added value on a daily basis that should be taken into account. However, in the African context, where one is ingenious without being an

engineer, industrious without being an industrialist, enterprising without being an entrepreneur (Berrou, 2014), it is necessary to give a voice to the actors in order to really understand their path. So how do informal sector actors perceive their entrepreneurial success?

From this perspective, the main objective of this work is to understand the perceptions of informal sector actors of their entrepreneurial success. In order to identify our research objective, the conduct of this work is based on a comprehensive approach. The interpretivist paradigm was chosen with a qualitative methodology deemed suitable for entrepreneurship research (Hlady-Rispal, 2002; Lebègue, 2015). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 (twenty) entrepreneurs in November 2022 around four themes. Thus, this article is structured in four main points. First, the theoretical framework of entrepreneurial success is presented. Second, the methodology adopted is described. Thirdly, the results obtained are presented. Fourthly, the results are discussed, highlighting the theoretical and managerial contributions of our work and ending with the perspectives and limitations of the research.

### **The Theoretical Framework Of Entrepreneurial Success**

Several conceptual and empirical works published from 2010 to 2022 provide a theoretical triptych on entrepreneurial success.

#### **An attempt to define entrepreneurial success**

The literature on entrepreneurial success is emerging but underdeveloped (Fisher et al., 2014). However, the theoretical basis visualises it as a multidimensional concept (Fisher et al., 2014; Lebègue, 2015; Nkakleu and Sakola, 2019). As a result, to define it, it is linked to synonyms (Wach, et al., 2016). Traditionally, entrepreneurial success is the performance of businesses (St Pierre and Cadieux, 2011). It can be called entrepreneurial success or simply success; which can be company or entrepreneur focused. (Pablo et al., 2018) explain that the conceptualisation of entrepreneurial success can be done depending on the unit of analysis (firm or entrepreneur). Entrepreneurial success is a continuous phenomenon that can occur at a specific point in time and can even be iterative in nature (Fisher et al., 2014). It is a polysemous concept because each researcher analyses it according to his or her choices (Lhaloui and Bakour, 2020). In addition, its plural character stems from the experiences of the actors with the consideration of the context which is a capital element (Hadrich, 2013; Nkakleu and Sakola, 2019). Moreover, it is difficult to dissociate entrepreneurial success from factors such as profile, environment and managerial skills (Laichi, Bedda'a & Bakkouchi; 2022). This is especially true since (St-Pierre & Cadieux, 2011) understand it as the ability of a company to achieve a turnover. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2012) defines it in terms of the professional and personal goals of each entrepreneur.

#### **Criteria for Assessing the Concept of Entrepreneurial Success**

The appreciation of entrepreneurial success has undergone a great evolution. There has been a shift from the classical to the so-called reformist approaches. However, entrepreneurs value and understand success differently depending on their experiences (Pablo et al., 2018).

## Objective Criteria for Entrepreneurial Success

Indicators such as company size, revenue growth, sales and market expansion continue to dominate the literature on objective criteria for entrepreneurial success (Wach et al., 2016). This objective success is economic. It is financial gain (Ibid.). It can be synonymous with business performance as it incorporates economic indicators of efficiency such as the level of turnover, business survival and profits (St-Pierre & Cadieux, 2011; Lebègue, 2015; Wach et al., 2016).

In addition, the objective approach to entrepreneurial success also takes into account the growth of the enterprise. For this purpose, entrepreneurial success is identified through the performance of the enterprise. It can also be recognised from indicators of firm growth such as productivity, number of employees and financial results (Ayala & Manzano, 2014). Nevertheless, the empirical work mobilised to study entrepreneurial success informs that, objective criteria alone are not sufficient to appreciate this concept because they limit the degree of assertion of it. Thus, (Sarasvathy et al., 2011) state that entrepreneurial success cannot be simply equated with business performance let alone financial reward. The single-minded fixation of entrepreneurial success on monetary gains and related economic indicators of firm performance may not better explain this entrepreneurial phenomenon (Wach et al., 2016). Therefore, subjective criteria of entrepreneurial success need to be developed (Lebègue, 2015). Also, exclusively quantitative criteria limit the in-depth assessment of entrepreneurial success (Sogbossi, 2010). This limitation will lead researchers to move towards a new, more comprehensive approach to entrepreneurial success. For (Pablo & Stephens, 2018), the importance is to complement criterion-based approaches with interpretive approaches that are, moreover, based on the understanding of phenomena.

## Subjective Criteria for Entrepreneurial Success

According to (Wach et al., 2016), subjective entrepreneurial success is the individual understanding and evaluation of the achievement of criteria that are personally important to entrepreneurs. This subjective approach assumes that entrepreneurs themselves define the criteria by which they will evaluate their success (Lebègue, 2015). Entrepreneurs value success differently and understand it differently (Pablo et al., 2018). For this reason, it is necessary to see success from the entrepreneur's experiences. However, the subjective criteria that emerge more in the literature are among others the satisfaction and pride of the entrepreneur (Fisher & al., 2014).

## Complementary Criteria for Entrepreneurial Success

The mixed approach combines both objective and subjective elements of entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, it includes both real and intangible measures or is measured by non-financial and financial criteria (Nkakleu & Sakola, 2019). In general, entrepreneurial success can be assessed across contexts, sectors, genders, etc. It makes sense to also take into account the perception of informal entrepreneurs.

## EPISTEMOLOGICAL POSTURE AND QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

### Background to the Research

The informal sector is a reality in entrepreneurship with fluctuating figures that have evolved since the economic crisis of the 1980s in Africa. While informal entrepreneurship is "a forgotten reality" (Berrou, 2019) in developed countries, it is very important in developing countries. Over the last few years, there has been a strong expansion of this sector, which is of interest to the economy and can be an important lever to be taken into consideration (ILO, 2017). The informal sector therefore offers the bulk of employment opportunities. But although widespread, these jobs are vulnerable, according to the Cameroon Household Survey (ECAM, 2014). In this report, the informal sector was the main provider of jobs with nearly nine out of ten (89.5%) employed workers, 86% of whom were men and 93.2% women. These informal jobs are divided between the agricultural (40%) and non-agricultural (40.9%) sectors, while industry employs only 13.4% of the workforce, 16.5% of whom are men and 10.3% women. As for the tertiary sector, a slight increase was observed from 2007 to 2014, with 38.1% of men and 34.1% of women (ILO, 2017).

### Justification of the Epistemological Posture

The originality of this research lies in the use of the concept "perception" in the formulation of the study's theme. Thus, the study is part of a comprehensive logic and is positioned in the interpretativist paradigm. We use an empirical-inductive approach to interpret the perception of entrepreneurial success of informal sector actors in the city of Douala. The aim is to understand what entrepreneurial success means to them. Entrepreneurial success is not governed by a natural law, but remains a social phenomenon that falls within the entrepreneurial domain.

### Qualitative Methodology Based on a Case Study

This research is in line with the continuity of works that mobilise qualitative methodology and show the importance of giving a voice to entrepreneurs so that they can give their opinions on an entrepreneurial phenomenon under study (Sogbossi, 2010; Lebegue, 2015). To conceptualise the perception of entrepreneurial success by informal sector entrepreneurs, we use the methodological rigour of studies by (Hlady-Rispal, 2002, Miles & Huberman, 2003). This paper brings together entrepreneurs from various sectors of activity who are available to participate in the exchange through their varied experiences. To do so, the following are taken into account in this sample: field of activity, gender, age, degree and years of experience in the sector of activity. Thirty-three entrepreneurs took part in the interviews, but the words of twenty respondents were relevant because they were in line with the themes used in the interview guide. The sample was built up in a snowballing fashion following the theoretical saturation principle (Wach, Ute & Marjan, 2016).]

## Data Collection and Analysis

Semi-structured interviews were conducted on the basis of four themes, namely: the entrepreneur's history, motivation, appreciation of success, and socio-demographic profile. The views, thoughts and opinions of twenty entrepreneurs were collected. Their characteristics are presented in the table below (Table 1). The interviews began on 5 November 2022 and ended on 27 November 2022. The interviews were conducted face-to-face while developing observation; every detail had to be taken into account during the exchange. In addition, detailed and elaborate answers to the questions had to be given (Wach, Ute & Marjan, 2016). The average duration of the interviews was 30 (thirty) minutes with a total of twenty-eight interviews conducted and transcribed on forty-nine pages. These interviews were sometimes recorded during the exchange after a favourable opinion from the interviewee or we proceed to take notes and our daily logbook was updated. Respondents are given identifiers for the purpose (from EC 1 to EC 20) to guarantee their anonymity and respect the principle of confidentiality.

<b>Areas</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Diploma</b>	<b>Year of experience</b>
<b>Trade</b>	EC 1	Gender professional	F	40 years	CEPE	10 years
	EC 2	Gender professional	F	26 years old	BEPC	3 years
	EC 3	Gender professional	F	30 years	Probationary C	7 years
	EC 4	Gender professional	F	38 years old	Baccalaureate A	13 years
	EC 17	Shopkeeper live fresh	F	53 years old	CEPE	20 years
	EC 18	Tea seller	F	19 years old	Master 1	3 years
	EC 19	Hysacam waste saleswoman	F	49 years old	Self-taught	10 years
	EC 20	Ginger tea seller	F	43 years old	Baccalaureate	3 years
	EC 6	Psychic Tradipratician	M	58 years old	Cap	37 years old
	EC 7	Psychic Tradipratician	M	48 years old	Baccalaureate	26 years old
	EC 8	Traditional psychic	F	60 years	CEPE	22 years old
	EC 9	Traditional psychic	F	51 years old	Probationary	23 years old
<b>Health</b>	EC 10	Neighbourhood nurse	F	43 years old	IDE	7 years
<b>Transport</b>	EC 11	Moto-taximan	M	44 years old	CAP	5 years
	EC 12	Moto-taximan	M	49 years old	Probationary C	15 years
	EC 13	Driver-clerk	M	45 years old	Probationary	5 years

	EC 14	Motorbike taxiwoman	F	42 years old	BEPC	8 years
	EC 5	Moto-taximan	M	51 years old	DUT	13 years
	EC 15	Shoemaker	M	38 years old	Primary level	9 years
<b>Handicrafts</b>						
	EC 16	Cobbler	M	35 years	Self-taught	6 years
<i>Source: adapted from Lebègue (2015)</i>						

The table shows that women are the most represented in our sample (70%). Foreigners are found in the craft industry (10%) and the traditional medicine sector has the highest professional experience (37 years).

Content analysis was favoured in our study (Lebègue, 2015; Wach, Ute and Marjan, 2016), mainly the manual method (Boukari, 2019). The coding of the data was based on the work of (Miles & Huberman, 2003). This transformation process makes it possible to simplify the data. The choice was made to use an open coding (Nkakleu & Sakola, 2019); which identifies, with the help of the questions in the interview guide, the themes of the study; the subsets by highlighting them. Thus, the analysis grid made it possible to gather information in an organised manner. This study was based on the matrix analysis grid of (Miles & Huberman, 2003), used by (Lebègue, 2015), which in turn was inspired by the analysis grid of (St-Pierre & Cadieux, 2011).

## RESULTS

### Diversity in the Definition of Entrepreneurial Success

For these actors, success is defined in these terms: "it is finding one's account in the activity carried out"; more expressed among women than men, as shown by these excerpts: "It is finding one's account in what one does like me. There is no such thing as a silly job, the main thing is to have the banknotes, to be independent and to solve your problems" **EC2**. For another category, the definition refers to "fulfilling one's mission on earth". **EC7** defines it as "fulfilling the mission entrusted to us because our work here cannot explain everything"; while the traditional seer **EC8** replies "It is when you fulfil your mission by helping people that you can say that you have succeeded, but only God can judge". The comments of this group of actors converge on the unanimity of the definition of success. We note that they belong to the same field of activity, particularly traditional health. For the last group of entrepreneurs, "it is reaching the objective we set for ourselves", as illustrated by the words of **EC 4**; "for me, success means reaching the objective we set for ourselves at the start. Achieving your dreams like me. I have a beautiful son, I look good, smell good, wear nice clothes and sleep with whoever I want.

### Different Perceptions of Entrepreneurial Success Among Stakeholders

These results show that the perception of success is measured by patient or client satisfaction, number of achievements and problem solving. Ten excerpts from speeches illustrate

the perception of success in problem solving. Here are some of them: "When I solve my problems, satisfy my customers and save money to grow my business I have succeeded". **EC 19**, **EC 20** and **EC 17** follow the same pattern of "when I solve my problems, I feel successful". For another caste, especially those working in the health sector, the perception of success refers to the satisfaction of patients and needs. A few illustrative words: "satisfying my patients by providing them with solutions to their various ailments and helping them as soon as they show me the problem, even if I'm just passing through an area, gives me great satisfaction" **EC 9**, traditional doctor. Whereas for **EC 10**, nurse: "When my clients always come back as it is the case and I am always able to satisfy them. I bring them the care they want and I solve my family's problems".

### **An Assessment of Entrepreneurial Success Using Objective and Subjective Criteria**

Entrepreneurs value their success in terms of improved quality of life, recognition from friends and family, the ability to save, to enjoy themselves, to develop their businesses and to receive social assistance. From their speeches it emerges: "I find my account in the garbage because I do everything with it, my well-being is guaranteed as well as that of my children and I do not complain. I travel through this activity and I am already training the children. The two houses built with the tenants already come from the money of the Hysacam garbage" (Female entrepreneur working for 10 years and selling waste). Another entrepreneur appreciates success through the satisfaction of daily needs and the realisation of life-changing projects. "Don't make me laugh, with my money I get dressed and I earn well, there are months when I work even 140,000 (one hundred and forty thousand) francs only by walking in all the districts where there are not too many cobblers even up to PK 21. I send the money back home for my wife and children, she pays for school and takes care of her. I also invest in my community here in Cameroon in different events as well as tontines"; **EC 15** (Foreign entrepreneur working in shoemaking for nine years). While for this female motorbike taxi entrepreneur who has been working for eight years, "I take care of myself, my children, my husband, my parents who live with me. In short, we don't lack anything and the minimum is assured at home. With the money from the motorbike I have invested in two projects that are doing well. A complete beignetaria that runs in the morning and evening and a car wash for vehicles, motorbikes, carpets, rugs ... that employs two people of whom I am the matron. The motorbike feeds its man and I am proud of it. For this category, the extension of the business into future investments as well as the well-being of the people around me are decisive in appreciating success.

For some actors, the criteria for success are to be found in non-economic elements such as: recognition by family and friends, taking personal responsibility by being fulfilled, realising one's dreams, using one's address book, relational networks. The results show that the subjective criteria are more expressed on the personal level of the entrepreneur and in terms of exchanges with those around him. **EC 4**, sex worker "I position my people through my relationships and I get pleasure myself that only one partner can offer me because one asked me to marry him, I told him that I like the outdoors and sex myself" For this group, it is the search for personal pleasure that enables them to appreciate success. For others, however, it is recognition, testimonies and gifts in kind that allow them to appreciate their success, as these words attest. **EC 6** "Today I have several patients who call me and come to my house, I have namesakes everywhere, women who give birth and give me their names, it gives me satisfaction, there is nothing more beautiful.

My address book is full and when I go to a department I find my patients who do me a favour and help me out, not forgetting the packages to show their gratitude towards me". For **EC 8**, "It's not all about money, my neighbours help me with my various needs (putting up my blocks, transporting my sick grandchildren, all my little needs, they help me as I help them too. The testimonies of the sick to thank me, the baby's soap as a sign of gratitude, the salt, the oils... these are the things I generally receive.

This appreciation of success through testimonies, gifts in kind can be justified by the context of African solidarity and community life with a strong impact of culture that has repercussions even on the activity carried out in the informal sector. This highlights a combination of objective and subjective factors to appreciate the success of a category of actors. For **EC3**, his address book is more extensive with the recognition of his clients, which manifests itself in various ways in these terms: "a client had to forget his chequebook and his wallet with everything in it and I gave it to him as a reward, he made me go and rest for a few days in Gabon with him, where I was looked after like a princess. This honesty gave me an important address book that opened doors I had never imagined in my life. I have moved on and I receive some clients by appointment only in chic hotels. One went so far as to help me get my cousin to Europe and another offered me a piece of land that he is building. Which not even the long pencils in my family have done. I am proud of myself ooh and I have succeeded in my "bordellerie" and I can't stop except for an external cause like serious illness. If someone tells you that sweat equity doesn't pay off, then they don't know how to do it. **EC 4** follows this line of thought by highlighting objective and subjective criteria, namely recognition and various achievements, as evidenced by his words: "I have succeeded in what I do, I don't complain, I live at home today thanks to the good services rendered to an engineer, I have two vehicles for travel, I travel abroad. I solve my problems, I have relationships, I help and position my people through my relationships and I get pleasure myself that one partner can't give me because one proposed to me, I told him I like the outdoors and sex myself. In the end, our results reveal three categories, six sub-categories and twenty-five success criteria identified by the respondents. Although it is acknowledged that there is a link between perceived success and motivation.

### **The Predominance of Push Motives of Informal Sector Actors**

Our results reveal that the motivations of these actors are: difficulty in finding a job, becoming one's own boss, becoming autonomous and independent, insufficient salary, the search for economic gains and the constraints of life. The motivational factor "difficulty in finding a job" is mainly expressed by women as evidenced by the words of these different respondents; **EC 1** "It was the excess of unemployment, my children had nothing to eat, I had been chased out of the house, everything was difficult and I saw my children crying every day. I said why suffer when my body can help me earn money? **EC 3**; "I had nothing to do and my problems were already beyond me; I had to go out and find something. It was the "nguemé" that pushed me to be here and I am proud of it today. Secondly, "becoming your own boss" is expressed more by men than women. The words of these entrepreneurs attest to this: "after a period of unemployment and the insufficient income paid in a company, I thought it would be useful to set up my own business" **EC 5**. For **EC 13**, a transport operator, "I always wanted to start my own business and not work for people anymore. After several abuses, when I didn't find my account, I took the vehicle that I helped out to start my own business on the Dalip-village line in the



morning and evening and I found my account. Finally, there are singularities such as "the desire to follow someone you admire, "long eyes", curiosity, the taste for the good life and above all the desire to vary partners, "when my body vibrated with several men I was happy" to admire or the desire to live passion" attested by these words "I was not hungry but I saw an aunt from the neighbourhood who was always beautiful, smelling good and chic. I approached her and asked her secret, she told me she is a luxury prostitute and trained me by giving me advice and tips. She was my godmother"; **EC 4**. Some motivations are external to the individual and drive them to pursue entrepreneurship by compulsion. They act because of life's constraints, certain inexplicable and unforeseen situations push them to act. This motivation is expressed by both men and women. These words allow us to justify them: "It is a work of God that I have accepted, because it is my mission. When you are called what can you do; I refused for a long time because I liked the good life but here I am in it for years"; **EC 8**. It is the incurable disease ; Sign that I was called but I did not understand ; **EC9**. "It is a transmission from my grandmother because I did not see myself in this profession when I was a child"; **EC7**.

These results from the fieldwork allow us to identify the dimensions and criteria of entrepreneurial success (see Table 2).

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Sub-dimensions</b>	<b>Measurement criteria</b>	<b>Objective criteria</b>	<b>Subjective criteria</b>
<b>Personal</b>		Family care	*****	
	Improving the quality of life of the entrepreneur	Purchase of clothing	*****	
		Paying for school	*****	
		Feeding yourself	*****	
		Payment of rent	***	
		Payment for light and water	***	
		Contribute/save	*****	
		To take personal responsibility for oneself by being fulfilled		*****
	Personal development of the entrepreneur	Indulge yourself		***
		Making dreams come true		**
		Rounding off the month	*	
		Travelling around the world	****	
		Organising your wedding	*	
		House construction	**	
Equipping my partner			*	
<b>Economic</b>	Skills development	Develop a network of contacts		**
		Using your address book		**
		Realise future projects / reinvest	**	
	Business development	Increasing the customer base	*	

		Enlarge business	*	
		Recruiting other employees	*	
		Helping a brother/family	*****	
<b>Social</b>	Social assistance	Positioning the children in the family	*	
	and well-being of the people around them	Investing in my community	***	
	Social recognition	Neighbourhood and family recognition		***
<i>Source: results of the study</i>				

## Legend

\*\*\*\*\*: cited by the majority of entrepreneurs \*\*\*: item cited on average by entrepreneurs \*\*: item cited by some entrepreneurs.

## DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

### Theoretical Contributions of the Research

Firstly; entrepreneurial success is plural in nature, it has no single definition as the literature reveals. Our findings of 'achieving the goal' are consistent with those of (Lebègue, 2015) where women entrepreneurs identify this as their definition of NCE and those of (Nkakleu & Sakola; 2019). The difference in definition lies in the level of finding one's account which was identified by the majority of our respondents. This plural aspect was also identified in the work of Wach, Ute and Marjan in 2016 with the highlighting of synonyms as entrepreneurial success. Moreover, this success is a continuous phenomenon with a strong emphasis on context as well as the nature of the activity. On this point, our work corroborates that of (Fisher et al., 2014) in terms of the conceptualisation of this entrepreneurial success among the different actors in particular in these terms; "entrepreneurial success is a phenomenon that seems to be understood by implication of the context". Secondly, the informal sector actors perceive their success in terms of meeting needs, satisfying patients or clients; the number of achievements and solving problems. Bringing wellbeing to its clients was identified by (Lebègue, 2015) and is close to the client satisfaction expressed in our context. The satisfaction of needs identified in the work of (Nkakleu & Sakola, 2017) corroborates with ours. The number of achievements is the element that has been less addressed by these two authors. Furthermore, "fulfilling one's mission on earth" is found among practitioners of traditional medicine in our case, this perception is different among traders who consider entrepreneurial success as: "finding one's account" or "fulfilling one's goals". Thirdly, our results show a strong female involvement (Lébègue, 2015) in informal entrepreneurship out of twenty selected cases twelve were female. Their dynamism is reflected in the resilience (Ayalo & Manzano, 2010) to bring their businesses to life to support the family. Also, there is a strong correlation between the actors' motivations and their purpose. Furthermore, entrepreneurs in the city of Douala engage in an activity because they have nothing on hand and want to get out of unemployment and this push motivation has the purpose of finding money. (Gabarret & Vedel, 2015) had already underlined this in their work by insisting

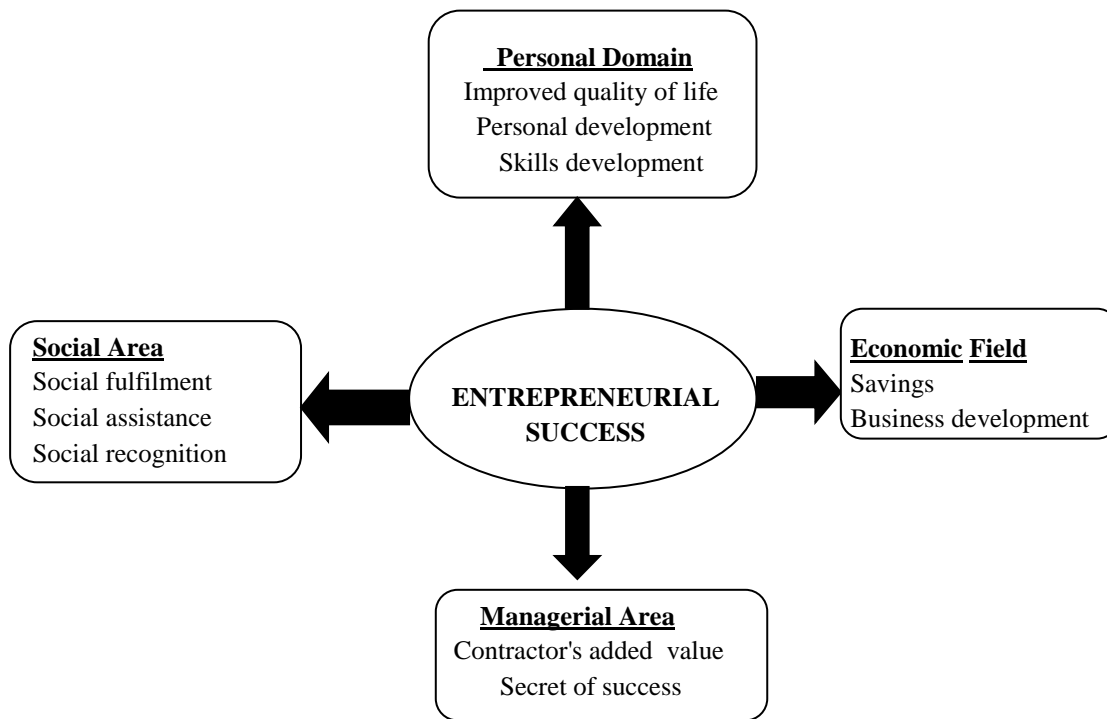
on the economic values illustrated by the positive or negative aspects stemming from the entrepreneur's personality.

Following this sub-section, we can propose a definition of entrepreneurial success by insisting that our research advances the perception of entrepreneurial success by emphasising the managerial aspect that reveals the secret of success for every wealth creator

**Managerial Contributions and Research Perspectives**

It is proposed collective entrepreneurship for capacity building of entrepreneurs. It is better for entrepreneurs to form a group to be more efficient and profitable because they can share experiences, complement each other, support each other, help each other and pool their strengths. It would be preferable if this collective entrepreneurship were effective by sector of activity.

Furthermore, the results of the study are not generalizable due to the use of the qualitative method and the small sample size (Figure 1). A quantitative study would allow the studies to be generalised. In addition, not all areas of informal sector activity in the city of Douala were covered. Our sample is limited to the city of Douala, an extension can be made to other cities in Cameroon to understand the specificities for a comparative study



**Figure 1**  
**PROPOSED DEFINITION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS VIA THE MATRIX**

**CONCLUSION**

We conducted a qualitative study in which twenty entrepreneurs were interviewed to find out their perception of entrepreneurial success. This article is in line with previous research that highlights a plural definition of entrepreneurial success. The context is once again crucial for the emergence of entrepreneurial activities. Women's entrepreneurship is also booming in the city of Douala with the resilient character of women. The analysis revealed new elements such as luck and occult practices as accompanying success. In this vein, the predominance of entrepreneurship out of necessity with economic goals for most of the respondents emerged, although extrinsic motivations totally external to the actors were identified with a constraining character that can be justified in the context with the belief in our cultures, our habits and customs. In view of the difficulty of financing these actors and the questions relating to the preparation of a serene retirement, it was suggested to look at collective entrepreneurship. The lack of consensus on the definition of entrepreneurial success implies other approaches to facilitate the understanding of the success of actors in the informal sector.

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