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# MAPPING THE FACTORS WHICH CONDITIONED THE ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE POLICIES BY FRENCH AND SPANISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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## INTRODUCTION

The paper focuses on sustainable innovation factors and practices in the French and Spanish local authorities. Concretely this paper tries to provide link from different theories, in order to understand the differences in the implementation in those countries local administrations. We have chosen, in objectivity and neutrality, to also mention the scientific look criticism from some authors on these concepts we will use in the following parts.

Firstly, to introduce the theoretical seeking, we consider that is important to understand the concepts of sustainability, accountability, ethics and democracy. Then we will study analyzes various fields of application in management sciences (social responsibility, social accounting, sustainable business, alternative management) and finally the interests of the local public application (Agenda 21, etc.). The concept of sustainable development emerged in the 80s, at the same time that the concept of Human Development at the United Nations, to counter the principles of the Development of the 50s, very associated with the notion of economic growth, all-powerful belief of the western people first, as developed countries, to find happiness.

The most common definition of sustainable development appears in the Brundtland Report: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. As the maxim "Think globally, act locally". The concept of sustainable development meets the philosophical, scientific and political thought of those who are interested in the impact of humans on the environment and the beings that compose it, thinking broadly called ecology. This sustainable development is both criticized by Theys, J., & Emelianoff, C. (2001) for his Jacobin origin, and Naro, G., Palpacuer, F., & Leroy, M. (2010) who sees a contradiction between sustainable growth implied by sustainable development and the notion of decay underpinned by ecology.

Local applications emanating from international summits on climate and sustainable development, they are valid both for private organizations that public organizations. Thus, Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S. (1999) develop prospects for Social Accountability of Enterprises, measures, according to them, inseparable from the economic success, while the action plan for local authorities "Agenda 21" was adopted by 178 heads of state at the Earth Summit in Rio. It calls for cross-application according to the 3 pillars: economic, social and environmental. Naro, G., Palpacuer, F., & Leroy, M. (2010) and Jempa Kanko Mutombo, E. (2006) respectively formulate critical of these intentions, with the fear that these devices confirm neoliberalism, head of an

unsustainable economic system development, rather than revolutionize it, that seems to be more ideological than scientific.

For communities, which is our research topic, but for firms too, democracy and ethics are inseparable from the concept of sustainable development, as explained Depaquit, S., search better synergy between sustainability requirements and involvement of citizens. Similarly, the fight against corruption is an integral part of the democratic and ethical principles. Although for critical, democracy can be involved in the popularization of the rulers or participates to slow down the decisions on sustainability, as explained Theys, J., & Emelianoff, C. (2001) and Van Den Hove, S. (2000).

Management, which is our science study, can also convert some of its practices, towards sustainability. The social economy advocates a system of redistribution of wealth created, and as alternative management and participatory governance, democratization of decision making. Social accounting proposes to transform into numerical value the human and environmental costs, as well as social performance plans to integrate new criteria other than economic. Again, Naro, G., Palpacuer, F., & Leroy, M. (2010) denounces “management by the numbers”, which for him is more carrying values than objectivity, thus odorless persuasion.

The interests of a local scale application is based largely on proximity between citizens and local governments, on the porosity of mutual information. The community can organize citizen approaches to sustainable development, awareness and lead by example. However, as Jempa Kanko Mutombo, E. (2006) accurate, if not to favor the top-down approach.

This paper will now discuss the practices of sustainable development in the first part, and the factors of innovation for sustainable development in the second part, and try to put them in touch.

## **PART 1: LOCAL PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The first part explores the theoretical practices for sustainable development of European cities, through various books and exploratory research, and allows to group, as has done some authors, in four categories: environmental, social, economy, governance, as proposed Brodhag, C. (1999). The variables in local practices of sustainable development is the dependent variable. We have chosen to work on a very local analysis of environmental practices, that is to say at the municipal level, which is easily comparable internationally, since the French and Spanish municipalities practically have the same skills and same sustainable practices. The administrative division and the division of powers between the larger authorities scale differs between France and Spain, and is therefore not comparable in terms of practices or factors.

Specifically, many authors, as Charlot-Valdieu, C., Outrequin, P. (2009), Theys, J. (2002), Carlier, B. (2012), explore a number of sub-variables related to social, first dependent variable, such as the North-South cooperation, access to housing, urban planning and insersion in which the community can play an important role. Others, like Angelini, C. et Al. (2012), evoke other variables, which we attribute to the economic field (second dependent variable) as CSR practices, encouraging new forms of savings, like social economy, cooperative societies, fair trade, encouraging integration and

promotion of 'environmental work', in the field of energy , insulation , waste recycling, agro-ecology , food short circuits for examples, possible levers for communities.

On the other hand, authors like Lepoutre, J., Heene, A. (2006), Martinet, A. C., Payaud, M. A. (2007), Tahri, N. (2010), Gray, R. (2002), Charlot-Valdieu, C., Outrequin, P. (2009) evoke the various options in participatory governance (third dependent variable), the local democracy, grid integration, transparency, and social accounting, integration of stakeholders and power struggles with the higher authorities. They may take the form of public forums, local referendums , publication of communities budgets on the internet, non -accumulation of for elected officials and publication heritage and taken interest, for examples.

Finally, numerous works list possible actions in our fourth and often more important dependent variable: the preservation of the environment, divided into 12 sub-variables that are : the heritage, urban planning, transportation, energy , air, waste, water and sanitation, landscape and biodiversity, noise, public spaces, risks and yards. Certain actions and sub-variables concern several variables, such as support for the social economy, which comes in both economic variable by the nature of its title, that of participatory governance through its new democratic practices , the social for its efforts in professional insersion, and the environment by promoting best practices.

These four variables are deployed in hundreds of concrete actions by the authorities to engage in a more sustainable development, which they call Agenda 21. We will analyze in the next section, the factors that are responsible for these actions, the source of innovations in sustainable development.

## **PART 2: THE FACTORS OF SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION**

The part explores the general innovation factors in institutions, next the factors relating specifically communities, and after the factors relating in particular to sustainable development.

For the first part of the research on institutional innovation, Weber, M. (1904-1905), to Di Maggio, Paul J., Powell, Walter W. (1983), through Biot, V. (2003-2004), authors working on the evolution of institutions offer us the pattern of neo-institutional isomorphism, corresponding to a progressive harmonization of institutions, some to bureaucracy, for others to democracy. It will represent our first explanatory sub-variable. Di Maggio, Paul J., Powell, Walter W. (1983) offer us to divide these isomorphisms into three categories. The first is the coercive category, legislated by the top institutions. The second is the mimetic group, inspired by the other institutions of the same level. The third is normative dimension that is inspired by social norms. The is one for Rowan, B., Meyer, John W. (1977) that is the environmental one, that ment the influence of institutional environment.

This is confirmed by more specific research to sustainable development in the communities who see specific influences in these three categories, the largest number related to the coercive isomorphism, originating from Europe, state, local government located at the top, as shown by the research Carlier, B. (2012), Albareda, L., Lozano, J. M., Ysa, T. (2007), Bento, L. (2009). This is also confirmed that the work of researchers

in public managerial innovation in general, as Jempa Kanko Mutombo, E. (2006), Carassus, D., Gardey, D., Favoreu, C. (2013).

But the authors that focus on sustainable development in particular, like Franklin-Johnson, E., Richomme-Huet, K. (2012), Rowan, B., Meyer, John W. (1977), Scott, W. R. (1987), Gray, R., Brennan, A., Malpas, J. (2013) also foresee other types of factors, not institutional, influencing the practices of local communities in sustainable development. The study of these factors allowed us to group them into a new predictor in the global context. Many sub-variables are described by the authors, about the context of the local authority: economic, social, cultural, geographical, geopolitical, scientific, political, and environmental.

So here we have identified two sub-variables, the isomorphism and the global context, which can be grouped in the first explanatory variable: external factors in the local community. This includes variables that are not related to community activities, internal changes in its own situation, its decision-making choices. On the contrary, the factors of this category cannot be controlled, influenced by the community.

For the second part, many authors describe the influence of other local factors such as the guidance of local officials (other explanatory sub-variable) as Theys, J. (2002), Charlot-Valdieu, C., Outrequin, P. (2009), Van Den Hove, S. (2000), decisions taken by the technical or administrative staff (new explanatory sub-variable) communities, as also explain Naro, G., Palpacuer, F., & Leroy, M. (2010) and Albareda, L., Lozano, J. M., Ysa, T. (2007).

This influence associated with political figures is confirmed by researchers from the public innovation such as Nutt, P.C., Backoff, R.N. (1992), Berman, E.M., Wang, X. (2000), Carassus, D., Maurel, C. et Al. (2014), as well as the influence of technical leadership is confirmed by Fernandez, S., Rainey H.G. (2006), Walker, R. (2006), Rusaw, A. C. (2007). These two categories of factors are the explanatory variable called leaderships.

Research on sustainable innovations by Freeman, R. E., Wicks, A. C., Parmar, B. (2004), Lepoutre, J., Heene, A. (2006) indicates the existence of other local factors that are not related to leadership. The categories in which we have grouped them are material or organizational context, local economic conditions, local social context, local political context. These factors can be summarized in the explanatory sub-variable: local context.

According to this research, two categories of factors, leadership and local contexts, can be grouped into a new explanatory variable: internal factors to the community.

This research confirms the existence of two categories of factors: first, the internal factors, here with two sub-categories, which are leadership (technical and political) and local contexts (economic, geographic ...) and then external factors, in our case also with two sub-categories, which are isomorphisms (including the neo-institutional theory) and global contexts (geopolitical, cultural and social ...). Our work allows to relates the sustainable development practices, and its four sub-categories, with sustainable innovation inputs and four sub-categories.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the paper was used to study the contours of sustainable development and the internal contradictions in its content and its origins. He also identified the benefits of its application to public and private institutions, and disadvantages, as well as the strengths and brake application to local authorities. We have stressed that, locally, four pillars, including participatory governance, and the dangers and opportunities that it can represent. We also discussed opportunities for implementing sustainable development in management science, and criticism that can be made to these attempts.

Thus, based on the observation that there are different interpretations of the relevance of Agenda 21, the paper has to understand that the local authorities, especially the municipalities can initiate sustainable development actions in four categories: the field social, environmental, economic, and governance. They represent the dependent variables.

The paper then served to link certain categories of factors that are behind these innovations in sustainable development in common: the internal factors and external factors. They represent the explanatory variables of our research. This theoretical study of the influence of lasting political factors could be pursued in the context of empirical research to verify, on the one hand the application of the public policy in the communities listed in a process of Agenda 21 and on another hand the relevance of the factors identified by this theoretical study.

This field of operation could be conducted internationally, in order to see the similarities and differences between the practices and factors for different states. It would also allow us to understand whether there is a link between the four dependent variables and the two variables.

The interest of this research is to offer local authorities, especially the municipalities, the proper tools to implement sustainable development initiatives, since we now know the levers available to them. In order to apply different management strategies for different categories of sustainable development practices. It allowed us to understand that these scientific initiatives are not the only possible approaches to sustainable development, that all levels of our society are involved, and that we can question the overall managerial proposals from the neoliberal system, which management is party involved.

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