
Social, economic and environmental factors and the relationship with the knowledge and skills of entrepreneurs (KSE) and companies internal factors (CIF). Findings in collective enterprises in crisis situations in a country

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Abstract: This research refers to solidarity entrepreneurship, where the factors that explain the social, economic and environmental success in the creation of non-profit organisations in a context of crisis in Colombia are analysed. This study is based on the concept of entrepreneurship in social organisations during the peace talks in Colombia, which began in 2012 between the government and the insurgent group FARC. Cooperatives were identified that were formally constituted in 2012, with initiatives by people who undertook the processes for their own benefit and that of the community, generating sources of income, employment and work in the production of goods or services. The study analyses and explains how the skills and knowledge of entrepreneurs and internal factors have an influence with economic, social and environmental factors, thus generating benefits. The findings also show that it is in times of crisis that the central government needs to support collective business initiatives.

Keywords: social entrepreneurship; cooperative entrepreneurship; solidarity economy; social factors; economic; environmental; crisis; skills; knowledge; organisations.

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1 Introduction

This research refers to the identification and analysis of the factors that explain the success in the creation of solidarity organisations in a context of crisis in Colombia.

As a research topic, the evolution that entrepreneurship has had as a scientific field and in the generation of knowledge should be highlighted. However, this theme is in the gestation stage or beginning in countries like Colombia, where its emergence is basically focused on the last 10 years.

Organisations have been limited by their inventory of resources and capabilities and, therefore, entrepreneurship has proven to be a strategy in which despite the adversities in the environment, whether due to economic, political or social crisis, entrepreneurship requires of personal qualities that make it possible to gain access to valuable, differential and complementary resources and/or capabilities. This research analyses entrepreneurship from the theory of Resources and Capabilities defining resources as “the assets, organisational processes, attributes, information and knowledge controlled by a company that allow it to achieve and implement strategies that improve its effectiveness and efficiency” (Barney, 1991).

Taking as reference one of the seminars of the venture, Schumpeter (1934), who disseminated the concept of creative destruction “as a way of describing the transformation process that accompanies innovations, entrepreneurs create technical and financial innovations in a competitive environment in which they must assume different risks and benefits”. This implies that organisations must, on the one hand, have sufficient stability that allows them to manage their learning leading to continuous growth, but at the same time, they need to have sufficient flexibility to face their environment, which is at the same time constantly changing and highly competitive (Van Gils and Zwart, 2009).

This research identifies the success factors in the formation of solidarity or non-profit economy organisations in Colombia since 2009 and its influence on social, environmental and economic effectiveness, factors that are latent in organisations and factors that are included in the international agenda on social responsibility that organisations must legitimise regardless of their legal nature, in this sense the model Elkington’s¹ model known as triple income statement, links these three dimensions and the interaction that results from them.

In the Colombian context there has been an increase in unemployment rates since 2009, these being in percentages close to 10% in recent years. In 2015, the unemployment rate was 8.2%.² It is here that entrepreneurship takes shape and presents alternative solutions in difficult situations, so entrepreneurship is an adequate way to generate sources of work and income through conformation of organisations where the human being prevails as the subject and purpose of the economy.

This research aims to explain how entrepreneurial skills and knowledge (KSE) and internal company factors (CIF) have an influence or are related to economic, social and environmental factors. Several authors from the approach of the theory of resources and capabilities, state that “a company is a collection of resources, a knowledge tank to the extent that resources have individual competencies and are capable of providing diverse services. The way to use and dispose of this collection of resources, between different uses and in the course of time, is determined by administrative decisions” (Penrose (1959), in Ibarra (2004)).

The theory of resources and capabilities takes into account the strengths of the organisation represented in resources and capabilities that allow it to have a competitive advantage and products and services that are difficult to imitate. The resources and capacities of companies can be translated as that endowment or inventory of resources that is the result of its own history and that this composition can be maintained over time (Peteraf, 1993).

The empirical verification was carried out in a sample of cooperatives in Colombia, using a research methodology with a quantitative approach, in which the multiple regression analysis was used and as a previous analysis to select the variables the main components analysis (MCA). This work Its purpose is to answer the following research question. How do entrepreneurial skills and abilities (ESA) and internal company factors (ICF) have an influence or are related to economic, social and environmental factors? In order to answer this research question, the objective was to identify the social, economic and environmental factors of solidarity economy organisations that were constituted in crisis situations in Colombia, through the influence of internal factors and entrepreneurial capacities.

2 Methodology

For the year 2015, 1450 cooperatives were registered in Colombia before the Superintendence of the Solidarity Economy, 147 in Valle del Cauca and to date, 70 such organisations have been registered in the Chamber of Commerce of Cali. To conduct a deeper and more detailed study, it was focused only on the cooperatives established in the city of Cali, which were analysed throughout the research process. According to the Chamber of Commerce, of the 70 registered cooperatives, 40 are multi-active, 26 of associated work, two are integral, one specialised in savings and credit, and one classified as pre-associated work cooperative.

Taking into account the population under study, for research purposes a sample of 65 active cooperatives formally established between 2009 and 2015 and registered in the Chamber of Commerce of the city of Cali. During this period information was obtained from each organisation, which was extracted through the application of a survey of the entrepreneurs or managers of the organisations studied in the months of March and April 2016 and the database provided by the Chamber of Commerce of Cali. A group of interviewers and the researcher visited the cooperatives by appointment and other visits were made without appointments.

In this investigation, the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was used, which allowed to establish the relationship that is generated between a dependent variable, in this case the Economic, Social and Environmental factors and a set of independent variables such as the Conocimientos and Skills of the Entrepreneur (KSE) each with its Items or indicators and the Internal Factors of the Company (CIF). This is how the model equation would be represented as follows: $Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + \dots + b_nx_n + e$, where Y is the dependent variable to predict and a and b are the parameters that are unknown and are going to be estimated.

3 Literature development and review

There are various modalities of entrepreneurship and one of them is precisely the one that impacts a change in society and that in turn benefits not only an owner or a single entrepreneur but also several people, and it is what is known as social entrepreneurship, which concept was introduced by Bill Drayton, who founded the Association of Innovative Social Entrepreneurs in the USA (Ashoka, 2009). The social entrepreneur is the one which innovates and generates social change³ for the benefit of a community, region or country.

Another nuance of entrepreneurship is known as cooperative entrepreneurship, which has its beginnings at the time of the industrial revolution (1844), and whose history stands out as a group of workers of a textile company in England that made the decision to undertake, forming their own company, thus leaving their alienation processes where they were submitted by an employer (Serrano, 2007). The cooperative entrepreneur, who starts his business through a company figure collectively, non-profit or for profit, depending on the legislation in the countries, and that benefits only the people who conform it, whether as partners or associates.

And finally there is a traditional venture that is characteristic of capitalist companies where individual capacities and profitability prevail in the hands of few people or an individual entrepreneur.

To be able to create a company, you must start by recognising an entrepreneurial opportunity, a definition of this could be: "Entrepreneurship opportunities are those situations in which new goods, services, raw materials and organisational methods can be sold and introduced at a price higher than its production costs" (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000).

In order to define entrepreneurship, it is necessary to bring up, the first person to introduce a contribution to this topic, in economic literature, is Cantillón (Perdomo Charry, 2010), who defined the entrepreneur as the "agent that buys the means of production at certain prices and combines them in an orderly way to get a new product from there". In addition, he says that the entrepreneur does not have a safe return on his economic activity and is the one who assumes the risks that may arise in the market (Thornton, 1998). Subsequently, according to Burnett (2000) the French economist Say, made a contribution to what Cantillón said, which affirmed that the entrepreneur is "a new leader, forecaster, risk taker and project evaluator, and that mobilises resources from a low performance area to a high productivity one". In addition to this, he highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship for society in general, rather than for a single individual (Formichella, 2004).

Subsequently, the Austrian school emphasises this issue, which says that the entrepreneur is the one who identifies opportunities in the market using his knowledge and being creative when entering it. In the same way they say that it should not be given importance to the end, but to the market process, and the importance of competition, since this is what leads to the discovery and creativity (Perdomo Charry, 2010). Social entrepreneurs have taken great strength in the business world. This type of entrepreneurs have considered social needs as an opportunity and not as a problem, seeking in this way to contribute and improve the well-being of the individuals who together represent a community. According to the European EMES research network created in 1996, the social enterprise "is defined as an organisation created in order to achieve a goal related to benefiting a community". This company is made up of a number of people who seek to

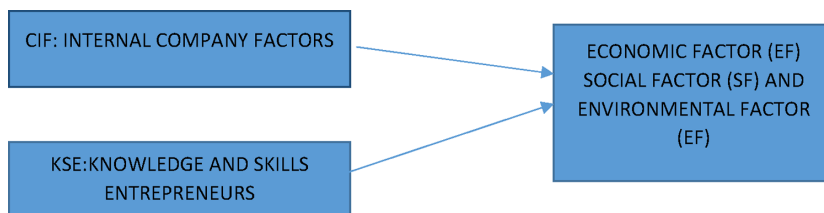
achieve their objectives through cooperation, and where the dynamics of profits vary from a conventional capitalist company. In this case, dividends are generally reinvested in the company in order to improve the product or service they offer, and finally contribute more effectively to the social problem that is being worked on López et al. (2011). In this order of ideas, “entrepreneurship implies turning a new idea into a successful innovation using skills such as vision, creativity, persistence and risk exposure” (Grau, 2012). As Pomerantz (2013) states, social enterprises must be based on traditional and innovative business methods, with the purpose of incorporating strategies that lead them to success in a faster and safer way.

The theory of solidarity entrepreneurship arises from the analysis carried out by Gide (1968) who states: “the associations in which workers will perceive the integral product of their work, because they will possess their production instruments; associations that will suppress the intermediaries, because they will change their products directly, associations that will not mutilate the individual because the individual initiative will be preserved as the hidden spring that will move each one of them and that on the contrary will protect against the hazards of the life through the practice of solidarity; associations, in short, that without suppressing the emulation that is indispensable to progress, will attenuate the concurrence and struggle, suppressing most of the causes that put men in conflict in our time”. From an economic perspective, there are other authors who write on the subject. Raceto (1993), with his experience in Chile, analysed how certain communities undertook economic organisations with their own initiatives and resources, in order to help themselves collectively. Raceto also proposes comprehensive economic theory with the aim of understanding social and solidarity relations and that make up a rationality different from state or market organisations. It also proposes factor C as that social energy that energises the processes that are undertaken. The ultimate goal of a solidarity venture is not the maximisation of the capital factor or the obtaining of profits, but to achieve better benefits for the greatest number of people and their communities (Zabala, 2011).

Solidarity ventures have their particular characteristics that differentiate them in other ways: they are self-managed, since entrepreneurs are managers, workers, and users of services; Solidarity economic ventures cover various forms of economic organisations that originate in the free association of workers based on principles of self-management, cooperation, efficiency, and viability (Gaiger, 2003).

Figure 1 presents in a general way the basic model with each of the variables, both independent and dependent. The selection of the model is based on or taken up from the proposal presented by the researchers Campos et al. (2014) in their study on the determining factors in the success of the creation of small and medium enterprises: Case of cooperatives in Spain.

Figure 1 Analysis model (see online version for colours)



Source: Own elaboration based on Campos et al. (2014)

It is worth noting that this same model was validated for the new cooperatives formed in Colombia in times of crisis or more specifically at the time of the peace dialogues between the years 2009 and 2015. The same latent variables proposed by the already mentioned researchers were maintained.

In this regard and in relation to the model, the research took into account the internal factors of the company, which were grouped into different functional areas: Marketing, Provisioning, Production, innovation, Human Resources, Finance and Management (Campos et al., 2014) and how these influence social, economic and environmental factors. With reference to the individual level, the entrepreneur's perception of the importance of internal factors in the creation and success of companies were taken into account. The idea with the empirical research process is to analyse the effects that these independent factors or variables (internal company factors CIF and the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneur KSE) have on the degree of social, economic and environmental success (dependent variable) in a population of cooperative organisations little studied by researchers, as the background of the investigations have shown results of these factors and the influence on success for capitalist or lucrative companies.

The theory states that the success of the entrepreneurial activity, will depend on the knowledge and skills that the entrepreneur has and apply, the key factors in this process such as the ability to learn from the experience and training received (Zapalska, 1997; Timmons and Spinelli, 1999; Lundstrom and Stevenson, 2005; Barba-Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2012).

On the other hand, the theory states that entrepreneurs who believe they have the appropriate knowledge and skills to create and develop a company tend to generate favourable expectations regarding results (García et al., 2010), although in other jobs It is expressed that entrepreneurs have more knowledge and skills to identify businesses or start businesses other than social ones (Arando and Peña, 2006). The perspectives of entrepreneurs in the process of creating a company with respect to their internal factors can be a determining element in success (Shane, 2000; Baron, 2004).

Returning to Herron and Robinson (1993), Barba-Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo (2012), and García et al. (2010), in the words of Campos et al. (2014):

“The creation and success of a company depends largely on the motivation and skills of those who begin the process of creating a company; as indicated in other studies: entrepreneurs who consider they have appropriate skills and knowledge to create and develop a company, usually generate results and therefore business performance.” (pp.5–7)

According to what Veciana (2005) stated in relation to the business perspective and when analysing the internal factors that determine success in creation, these factors are considered as strengths and can positively influence the success of the creation of companies, as stated or corroborated in other research projects (Alonso and Galve, 2006). The internal factors correspond to the main functional areas of the company, these influence the success of the performance, as described and verified in research already carried out (Herron and Robinson, 1993; Baumol, 1993; Davidsson and Wiklund, 2001; Alonso and Galve, 2006).

When some resources are scarce, it can also influence the difficulty of achieving success when the company is formed, as Gartner (1985) puts it.

If the organisation optimises the use of resources, efficiency translates into economic advantages for it and for its stakeholders, that is, if the organisation manages

environmental processes, it will generate not only competitive advantage but the creation of new products or services that would be reflected in income.

Given the previous reference, this study aims to verify the following hypotheses:

H1: *The economic factor of the newly created cooperatives is positively related to the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneurial group and the initial endowment of internal factors of the company.*

H2: *The social factor of newly created cooperatives is positively related to the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneurial group and the initial endowment of internal factors of the company.*

H3: *The environmental factor of the newly created cooperatives is positively related to the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneurial group and the initial endowment of internal factors of the company.*

4 Discussion

When carrying out the analysis of the chosen sample, it was obtained that, in 2012, 21 cooperatives were formed (see Figure 2), it should be noted that this year was when the peace dialogue process began and it was in turn, when the largest number of cooperatives in the sample were created, followed by 2015 in which 15 cooperatives were created. In turn, an increase is observed during 2012, of 250% compared to the previous year, however, during the years 2013 and 2014 there is a decrease of 62% and 75%, respectively, compared to the previous year. For the year 2015 a growth of the number of cooperatives created of 650% can be observed, compared to 2014.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of cooperatives created from 2012 to 2015, compared to the percentage of cooperatives created from 2009 to 2011. In this figure, it can be clearly seen that the percentage from 2012 to 2015 is higher, therefore it can be affirmed that during the period of the peace dialogues in Colombia (2012–2015) there has been an increase in the number of cooperatives formed in the city of Cali.

Table 1 presents the summary of results of the linear regression and Table 2 is the summary of the hypothesis contrast.

Figure 2 Conformed cooperatives (see online version for colours)

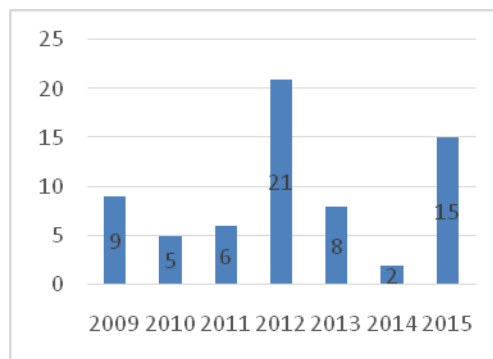
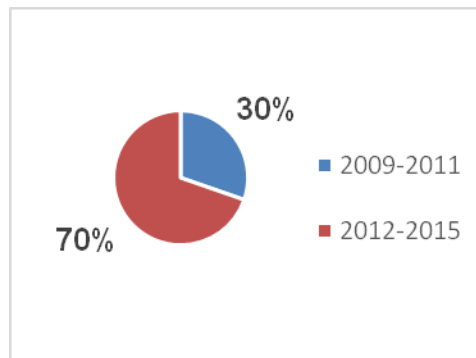


Figure 3 % of cooperatives (see online version for colours)**Table 1** Summary linear regression results

	<i>FE</i>		<i>FS</i>		<i>FM</i>	
	<i>Valor</i>	<i>Sig</i>	<i>Valor</i>	<i>Sig</i>	<i>Valor</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Constant	1.372	1.000	2.308	1.000	1.761	1.000
KSE	-0.286	0.042	0.055	0.24	0.113	0.400
ICF	1.110	0.000	1.126	0.000	1.022	0.000
RR2	0.750		0.836		0.785	
r2 Corregida	0.742		0.828		0.774	
Durbin-Whayson	1.654		1.888		1.725	
Anova (F)	92,851		103,436		74,190	

** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 2 Hypothesis contrast

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Equation</i>	<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Results</i>
H1	$FE = \alpha_1 + \beta_{1.1} CHE + \beta_{1.2} FIE - FE$ $= 1.372 - 0.286 * CHE + 1.110 * FIE$	$R^2 = 74.2\%$; $DW = 1.654$; $Anova = p < 0.01$; $VIF = 4.710$	It is accepted
H2	$FS = \alpha_2 + \beta_{2.1} CHE + \beta_{2.2} FIE$ $+ \beta_{2.3} FE - FS = 2.308 + 0.055 * CHE$ $+ 1.126 * FIE - 0.324 * FE$	$R^2 = 82.8\%$; $DW = 1.888$; $Anova = p < 0.01$; $VIF = 5.037 - 9.630$	It is accepted
H3	$FM = \alpha_3 + \beta_{3.1} CHE + \beta_{3.2} FIE$ $+ \beta_{3.3} FE - FM = 1.761 + 0.113 * CHE$ $+ 1.022 * FIE + 0.43 * FE$	$R^2 = 77.4\%$; $DW = 1.725$; $Anova = p < 0.01$; $VIF = 5.037 - 9.630 - 3.995$	It is accepted

Taking into account the results and observing Tables 1 and 2, the adjusted R2 of equation (1) or H1 takes a value of 0.74, which means that the KSE (Knowledge and skills of the Entrepreneur) and the CIF (Internal Factors of the Company) jointly explain 74% of the EF (Economic Factor) of the cooperatives that were formed in the context of crisis; In addition, the ANOVA test of the same equation was statistically significant 0.01, which indicates that the equation is statistically significant and therefore it is possible to reliably explain the economic factor of cooperatives based on the application

of KSE and the use of the CIF. Regarding the interpretation of the estimated B in the equation, it can be said in the case of the first hypothesis that as the entrepreneur's knowledge and skills (KSE) increases, the economic factor (EF) worsens, the opposite occurs with the factors internal company (CIF) that has a positive influence, that is, as these internal factors increase, the economic factor improves, among the most significant factors of the (KSE) and that presents an important level of correlation for this construction, we have the capacity to predict and anticipate change, modernisation in management, as well as the ability to adapt to changes, these factors do not have such a positive impact on the economic factor as if it presents them: process organisation and production, process innovation of production, innovation in products or services, the implementation of strategic plans, the image of the organisation, and professionalisation management.

On the other hand, the adjusted R2 of equation (2) or H2 has a value of 0.828, which means that 82.8% of the Social Factor of cooperatives formed in crisis contexts can be explained with the use of KSE and application of the CIF. In addition, the ANOVA test of equation (2) turned out to be statistically significant at 0.01, so the level of reliability of equation (2) to explain the Social factor as well as that of equation (1) to explain the economic factor.

With reference to the interpretation of the estimated B of equation (2), it can be seen that both present (KSE and CIF) positive signs, so it would indicate that both the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneur and the internal factors of the company have a positive impact on the social factor.

Analysing equation (3), the adjusted R2 takes a value of 0.774, so that 77.4% of the Environmental Factor (EF) of cooperatives formed in the context of crisis can be explained by the application of KSE and ICF. In addition, the ANOVA test of equation (3) was statistically significant, so the level of reliability of the aforementioned equation can explain the FM based on the application of the KSE and CIF. Regarding the interpretation of the estimated B of equation (3), both the KSE and the CIF have a positive and statistically significant impact on the Environmental Factor.

The H1 of this research proposed that the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneur and the internal factors of the company, variables that are positively related to the Economic Factor (EF) of cooperatives formed in the context of crisis. From the estimated B of equation (1) or H1 it follows that the existence of a positive and statistically significant relationship at 0.05 between the CIF and the EE can be verified, while in the case of KSE and its impact with the Economic factor, This relationship has not been statistically 0.05, so it is possible to accept Hypothesis 1 partially.

The H2 of this study proposed that the KSE and CIF have a positive impact on the Social Factor of the newly created cooperatives, the results show R2 adjusted at a high level, in addition the estimated B for these equation present positive values, for what would be partially accepted.

In relation to H3 It is partially accepted, since CHEs have a non-significant relationship with FM ($0.40 > 0.05$) and FIEs have an impact + and are statistically significant.

5 Conclusions

This is how this study makes its contribution in the social and environmental variables, because according to the hypothesis contrast, both the social factors and the environmental factor are positively related to the knowledge and skills of the entrepreneurial group and to the factors Company interns. In this sense, the⁴ Elkington model known as triple bottom line (TBL) or the triple income statement, links the three dimensions (social, economic and environmental) and its constant and permanent interaction with organisations and their environment, was as well at the end of the 1990s, emphasis is placed on the environmental dimension as a result of the crisis in the world on environmental aspects, caused by human behaviour, especially the actions carried out by companies, in this context the environmental discourse began to gain strength in administrative theories and strategies.

The H2 and H3 contrast the validity of the theoretical approaches, confirming the positive influence of the KSE and CIF in relation to social and environmental factors. Other internal factors or indicators were found that, despite being strategic, are not in harmony with the proposed structural model or have a low correlation such as: financial costs, the level of indebtedness and the level of technology.

Given that during periods of crisis in Colombia (2012–2015) there was an increase in the number of cooperatives formed in the city of Cali, it would be good to analyse once the peace treaty is signed, if it is due to the greater demand for labour of the ex-guerrillas into society and because this brings a social problem, cooperatives will be created that support and help these people to integrate into society, and this would affect the growth of the number of cooperatives created in Colombia and in the same economy of the country.

The study offers inputs for future research to articulate the relationship of social, economic and environmental factors to the fulfilment of the 2030 agenda of the United Nations and more specifically with the Sustainable Development Goals, since by forming new associative forms they contribute to the poverty reduction and the improvement of the living conditions of related people, through decent and dignifying work.

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Notes

¹Tomado de: The triple bottom line of 21st century business. Oxford, 1997.

²According to data obtained from DANE – National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia.

³Regarding social change, Saco (2006, p.40) states that "It is a collective process of lasting alteration over time of the forms of operation and structuring of interactions between individuals or groups that changes the historical course of a collective".

⁴Oxford University, 1997.

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