

Social Mentoring: Towards Formal and Informal Deployment in the Structures of the Social and Solidarity Economy

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Abstract : Mentoring is positioned in an interpersonal and intergenerational perspective, serving the transmission of interpersonal skills and organizational culture. It echoes orientation, project, self-actualization, guidance, transmission, and filiation. It is available using a formal or informal approach. The formal dimension refers to a privileged relationship between a senior and a junior. Informal mentoring is unplanned and emerges naturally between two people who choose each other. However, it remains more difficult to understand. To study the link between formal and informal mentoring and to define the notion of "social" mentoring, we conducted a qualitative study of an exploratory nature with around ten SSE organizations located in the southeast region of Tunisia. The wealth of this territory has pushed residents to found SSE organizations with a view to creating jobs but also to preserving traditions and preserving nature. These organizations developed spontaneously to solve various local problems, such as the revitalization of deserted rural areas, environmental degradation, and the reskilling and professional reintegration of people marginalized in the labor market. This research, based on semi-structured interviews in order to obtain exhaustive and sensitive data, involves an interview guide with few questions mobilized to let the respondents, leaders of the different structures, express themselves freely. The guide includes questions on activities, methods of sharing knowledge, and difficulties in understanding between stakeholders. The interviews, lasting 30 to 60 minutes, were recorded using a dictaphone and then transcribed in full. The results are as follows: 1. We see two iterative mentoring loops. A first loop can be considered a type of formal mentoring. It highlights the support organized (in the form of training) by social enterprises with the aim of developing the autonomy, know-how, and interpersonal skills of members. A second loop concerns informal mentoring. This is non-formalized support provided by members or with other members of the entourage. This informal mentoring is mainly based on the observation of good practices and learning by doing. 2. We notice an intersection between the two loops. If the first loop is not done, the second will not take place. The knowledge acquired in the first loop is used to feed the second. 3. We note a form of reluctance on the part of some members to share their knowledge for reasons of competition. Ultimately, we retain the notion of "social" mentoring as a hybridization of formal and informal mentoring while dimensioning the "social" perspective by emphasizing the reciprocal character, solidarity, confidence, and trust between the mentor and the mentee.

Keywords : social innovation, social mentoring, social and solidarity economy, informal mentoring

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