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QUALITATIVE STUDY

Entrepreneurial Innovation and Strategic Adaptation

A Qualitative Exploration of Business Model Evolution in Morocco (2000–2026)

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ABSTRACT

The dynamic economic landscape of North Africa necessitates a deeper understanding of how enterprises innovate and adapt their business models. While strategic adaptation is recognised as crucial for resilience, there is limited qualitative research examining the lived experiences and cognitive processes driving this evolution within the region's unique institutional context. This study aims to explore the mechanisms and drivers of business model innovation among Moroccan enterprises. It seeks to understand how entrepreneurs perceive environmental shifts, make strategic decisions, and implement adaptive changes to their core business logic. A qualitative, multiple-case study design was employed, utilising purposive sampling to select 24 established enterprises. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with founders and senior executives, supplemented by analysis of internal documents. A thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo software. A predominant theme was the strategic integration of digital and traditional commerce, with over two-thirds of participants describing hybrid models as a deliberate response to infrastructural and cultural nuances. A concrete result is that successful adaptation was frequently driven by iterative, community-embedded learning rather than formal planning. Business model evolution in this context is a socially embedded, iterative process of strategic bricolage. Entrepreneurial cognition, shaped by local institutional logics, plays a more central role than previously emphasised in generic models of innovation. Policymakers should design support programmes that facilitate peer-learning networks and experimental piloting. Investors and educators should prioritise developing entrepreneurial capabilities in contextual intelligence and adaptive leadership. Business model innovation, strategic adaptation, entrepreneurial cognition, qualitative study, Morocco This paper provides a novel, empirically grounded framework of 'contextualised strategic bricolage', detailing the cognitive and behavioural pathways through which entrepreneurs in emerging economies reconfigure their business models.

Keywords: *Business model innovation, Strategic adaptation, Qualitative case study, North Africa, Entrepreneurial ecosystems, Grounded theory*

Article Highlights

- Hybrid digital-traditional models are a deliberate response to local infrastructural and cultural nuances.

Methodological Note

A qualitative multiple-case study of 24 Moroccan enterprises, using in-depth interviews and document

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful adaptation is frequently driven by iterative, community-embedded learning processes.• Entrepreneurial cognition, shaped by local institutional logics, is central to innovation.• The study proposes a novel framework of 'contextualised strategic bricolage'.	<p>analysis, analysed via thematic methods.</p> <p><i>This study offers a framework for understanding adaptive entrepreneurship in emerging economies.</i></p>
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ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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