

# Entrepreneurial Adult Education as a Catalyst for Youth Employability in Disadvantaged Areas

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**Abstract:-** In this article, we establish a correlational reflection between “entrepreneurial” andragogy and youth employability through a description of its characteristics and other specificities, the identification of its strengths and weaknesses and by proposals likely to engender an andragogy more likely to materialize its objectives. In fact, three data collection instruments are involved to achieve such a construct, in particular, a documentary exploitation necessary for a theorization of our theme, a questionnaire against ours ample of 22 young entrepreneurs and finally a guide maintenance for another sample of 6 andragogues. The results of this research reveal a “trompe l’œil” (57%) in terms of the characteristics and/or specificities of entrepreneurial andragogy in a disadvantaged environment point to the “lack” or “insufficiency” of State funding (82, 3%) as a major weakness of the adult training and consecutively propose and improvement and/or facilitation of the said (92, 6%), for more promising processes of habilitation and empowerment. In addition to its theoretical aspect, the scientific implication of such a study lies in the amplification of the field of knowledge relating to the general training of young adults, and more to entrepreneurship training in particular. The professional side of the implication of such a reflection concerns more its propensity to want to increase the knowledge, know-how and above all know-how of andragogues in terms of training, monitoring and support for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds specifically.

**Keywords:-** Andragogy, Entrepreneurial Andragogy, Entrepreneurship, Employability.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In his book *Psychology of Adult Life*, Boutinet (2013) describes the various clashes and resentments that plague an adult's mind in the face of worries about satisfying daily needs, and particularly employment. According to the United Nations (UN), young people who make up the largest demographic group in Africa (- with 60% of the population under the age of 25, and 80% under the age of 35 in 2020) are the first victims being in this state of mind. By comparison, young people make up less than 45% in North

America, Asia has 55% and Europe less than 40%. It is therefore clear that this large number of young people is going to pose a major concern for African governments in terms of employability and social integration, especially as, according to the UN, Africa alone will account for more than half of the world's demographic growth by 2050. This is precisely where entrepreneurial andragogy comes in based on the logic of authors such as Alberio (2000; 2010), Reichsmann (2004) and Blaise (2008). For these authors, entrepreneurial andragogy, understood as the basis for training and empowerment, is the panacea by excellence for curbing most of the risks associated with idleness among young people and, conversely, boosting their aptitude for self-employment. The AU (2020) follows the same trajectory, considering entrepreneurship "as a solution to the problem of unemployment".

Cameroon is no exception to this pattern of expression, and this makes our study timely, given the many difficulties faced by young people who are idle, school dropouts and disadvantaged. We are not limiting ourselves to the UN definition of youth, which is 15 to 24 years old (International Youth Year, 1985, A/36/215, resolution 36/28 of 1981), young people in Cameroon up to the age of 35 face countless difficulties, the main one being employment. In Cameroon, 1/3 have a decent job compared to 2/3 who have to make do with insecure work (ILO, 2021). There are many young people not educated, not training nor employed, who are swarm towns and villages of Cameroon in search of work. According to the ILO-Africa report, 1/5 of young Africans have no job, no training and no schooling whatsoever. The ILO goes even further, stating that in 2020 there will be 12.4 million unemployed young people in Africa, while the number of those without education nor training is estimated to be four times higher. It is clear from all this that the main issue in our study lies in access to quality, non-formal employment, which is guaranteed by a certain level of expertise and a real "apprenticeship" Carré (2005) resulting from andragogical input (Eneau, 2016). This study therefore sets out a set of research questions and objectives, followed by a methodology. We then present the results of the data collected and the resulting interpretation, followed by the discussion and finally the conclusion.

Training adults in entrepreneurship is a panacea for the major risk (Beck, 2001; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2000) posed by the integration and employability of today's citizens. In fact, every State has a duty to train its young people to enable them to respond to the daily challenges posed by the current context and situation (Astolfi, 1992; Blandin, 1990; Carre, 2001). In the African context of extremely precarious living and survival conditions, young people face enormous difficulties in acquiring decent jobs likely to get them out of the impoverished situation in which they find themselves, which often generates a great deal of frustration and other protests (Honwana, 2015). By way of illustration, Varela (1989) and Vassileff (1988) mention that one of today's major challenges in terms of young people's employability is to empower them in terms of skills and theoretical knowledge, but also in terms of practical training, i.e. know-how.

For this to be possible, a collaborative partnership between public authorities and private partners is required; so as to establish the convergences and connivances necessary to maximise the achievement of predefined training objectives (Hameline, 197; Hedoux, 1994; Houssaye, 1988). Admittedly, the fact that some young adults have dropped out of school and are totally inculturated does not make this easy (Haeuw, Rehouma, Thierry, 1996), but the fact remains that the development of new reference systems and the adoption of new paradigms in entrepreneurial andragogy are increasingly making it possible to get around this difficulty (D'Halluin and Poisson, 1990; 1998; Coulon and Haeuw, 2001). In fact, according to many authors, not only does the lack of training justify young people's difficulties in finding or creating a decent job, but it is also the catatonic source of their idleness, debasement and impoverishment. In such a context, andragogy undoubtedly becomes an outlet through which the difficulties identified are likely to find a happy ending, both for the individual handicapped by his shortcomings and the trainer responsible for offering him added value, and for the State who commissions such a policy. Training young people in entrepreneurship is not a challenge that can be tackled straight away or from nothing. On the contrary, it is the consequence of social policies skillfully developed and implemented by public authorities or private bodies with a certain expertise in the field (Danis and Solar, 1998). What's more, such training is undoubtedly aimed at solving a problem by equipping young adults with the entrepreneurial spirit (Chosson, 1975; Aumont and Mesnier, 1992), and by helping them acquire an additional skill that can become an undeniable asset in their process of empowerment and autonomy in creating and/or acquiring a job. In this way, the role of entrepreneurial andragogy becomes strongly correlated in the process of job acquisition or creation by young people specifically from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A number of research questions have been raised, but they can be summed up in a triptych: What are the characteristics and/or specific features of entrepreneurial andragogy in disadvantaged areas? In other words, what are the factors identified by andragogists as likely to motivate them in the face of failure or to boost the success of

andragogy in building an entrepreneurial culture and expertise among young people in these areas? Finally, what strategies should be adopted to ensure that entrepreneurial andragogy genuinely empowers young people in disadvantaged areas? This threefold questioning calls for a threefold objective for the sake of congruence: to identify, describe and document the characteristics and specific features of entrepreneurial andragogy in disadvantaged environments; to present the elements likely to reinforce or undermine its achievements, in this case its strengths and weaknesses in empowering young adults seeking employment; and finally to propose solutions for a more dynamic and job-providing andragogy and/or entrepreneurial spirit.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Typology

Our methodology is based on a mixed-methods approach (Paillé and Mucchielli, 2008) which has three main characteristics: correlational, exploratory and descriptive: Correlational because this study aims to establish the assumed or proven link between adult entrepreneurship training and their ability to become self-employed. Exploratory in the sense that it seeks to identify the motives, in and out of success and/or failure in its deployment process; And finally descriptive insofar as our research aims to specify and clarify the various characteristics and other specificities of adult training in disadvantaged environments.

### B. Participants

From April to June 2022, 22 young entrepreneurs from the localities of Mandjo, Kaélé and Yokadouma, selected on the basis of snowball sampling, were voluntarily invited to complete a questionnaire. 22% of these young people were aged under 25, 54% under 30 and 24% under 35. 3/22 were young women and the rest were men. 7/22 lived in Mandjo, 6/22 in Kaélé and 9/22 in Yokadouma. Most of these young people live permanently in the localities mentioned and present themselves as dynamic resourceful people whose strength lies more in their will than in the means to succeed. The questionnaires presented to the young people were threefold and aimed to provide information on the characteristics and specific features they had learned about during their entrepreneurship training, the strengths and weaknesses they had encountered in the process of setting up and running their businesses, and the appropriate strategies for improving them. On completion, 17/22 of the questionnaires were filled in. At the same time, 6 (senior) youth and leadership advisers (CPJA-CJA, i.e. one woman and 5 men) selected on the basis of the same sampling model - in the corresponding departments - completed the same questionnaires, this time in the form of an interview.

### C. Survey Techniques and Research Process

The survey techniques chosen were threefold, based as much on a questionnaire and an interview guide as on documentary analysis. In fact, and mainly with regard to the interviews, they were semi-directed and addressed solely to the CPJA (2) - CJA (4), in order to give them the freedom

and room to manoeuvre, they need to express their views on what they thought about the topics of the interview. As regards the conduct of the research, three batches of questionnaires were given to our three correspondents in the three different localities of our research sites. These correspondents are responsible for distributing the questionnaires to their entrepreneur counterparts in the locality, and then for collecting them once they have been completed. Prior work was carried out with our correspondents to brief them on the background to each of the themes raised and referred to in the questionnaire, which was also written in a very simple style. In this way, they are well-equipped to explain to their counterparts any possible grey areas that may arise in the work, with the last resort being a telephone call for personal clarification in the event of any misunderstanding. As far as the interviews are concerned, three are conducted by telephone and three others were live and in person.

#### *D. Data Collection and Processing Methods*

The interview outline: It should be pointed out that it is based on a literature search which was of great help in enabling us to construct both the questionnaire and the interview guide. Both deal with the characteristics and specific features of entrepreneurial andragogy in disadvantaged environments, their contribution or otherwise to employability policy in Cameroon, including their strengths and weaknesses, and finally strategies for improving their performance. Digital audio recording was used to collect data for some of the interviews, at least for those of our respondents who agreed to it. For the rest (2/6), field notes in a notepad were used to record opinions on the data observed or observable, the difficulties encountered, etc. About data processing: The verbal transcriptions were made "word for word", excluding onomatopoeia, silence and laughter. Verbal transcripts and recordings were checked throughout the process to minimise the risk of errors or loss of information or details.

As far as data entry was concerned, quantitative data was analysed using Excel, while textual or qualitative data was analysed using Atlas ti 5.0, which also enabled it to be coded. As regards the identification of participants, since each of our respondents took part in this research on a voluntary basis, we ritualised the elimination of any reference to personal data in order to guarantee the anonymity and confidentiality of each of our participants. Thus CPJA1 and CPJA2 refer respectively to the first and second principal youth and guidance counsellors interviewed. The same goes for CJA 1 or CJA 2, or CJA 3, or CJA 4, which refer to the first, second, third or fourth youth worker interviewed. Thus, CPJA2, no. 11 refers to the second principal youth worker interviewed, in his comments taken from paragraph 11; CJA4, no. 9 refers to the fourth youth worker interviewed, in his comments taken from paragraph 9. Most of the coding was carried out during the interviews with our control respondents, while the categorisation of the units of meaning was based on the open-ended model, given the exploratory nature of this research, which predisposes us to an influx of scattered information.

### **III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

As a reminder, at the start of this report on the results, our questionnaire focused on three themes: the characteristics of entrepreneurial andragogy, its strengths and weaknesses, and proposed strategies for more effective andragogy. From then on, and in relation to the data collection and analysis tools chosen, our results are presented from a dual quantitative and qualitative angle.

#### *A. Presentation of Quantitative Results*

Analysis of the data from our questionnaires shows that: 57% of our respondents described the training they received as "misleading" or "inappropriate". Their main reason for describing it as "misleading" is that they believe that all the necessary resources are deployed when it comes to actually implementing the training in the field. However, the same resources are no longer needed when it comes to helping the young people themselves to put the training they have received into practice by providing material and financial support for the various projects they have set up. In addition, the "inappropriate" nature of these training courses stems from the fact that they are not always congruent with local realities. This is the case, for example, with ICT-related training in environments where electricity is still a luxury for the local population, particularly young adults. Such courses run the risk of being stillborn, not because young people are not interested, but because they are not feasible in the current economic climate.

82.3% of respondents cited "lack of funding" or "insufficient state support", or "lack of monitoring" as the major weakness of adult education programmes. In fact, these respondents feel that it is not just a matter of implementing a policy, but also of adopting the financial, material and human resources needed to implement it. Failing this, the approach remains theoretical and conducive to a great deal of entrepreneurial atrophy.

66% of respondents felt that the major asset in terms of entrepreneurial andragogy was the State's "organisational structure" and, above all, its "willingness to reach out to all sections of society, even the most disadvantaged". In other words, it is a question of giving clear priority to the underprivileged social classes on an ethical and fair basis that supports giving priority to the less well-off. In other words, offering more to those who have less, without neglecting the other classes.

92.6% of respondents suggested that a strategy for more successful entrepreneurial andragogy would be to "facilitate" the funding process for young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds. Taking into account the realistic maxim that "money is the sinews of war", the aim here is to provide young entrepreneurs with the funds they need to implement their projects and create businesses that generate jobs for the majority. In this way, we are moving away from the theory of andragogical training and moving towards the effectiveness and practice of such training through concrete implementation in the field.

### B. Analysis of Qualitative Results

These are based on the same model as the previous ones, i.e. firstly a description of the characteristics and specific features of entrepreneurial andragogy in disadvantaged areas. Then a presentation of the strengths and weaknesses of andragogy in empowering young adults in these areas; and finally a proposal for solutions to make andragogy more dynamic and more conducive to employment and entrepreneurship.

#### ➤ *Characteristics and Specific Features of Entrepreneurial Andragogy in Disadvantaged Environments*

From our interviews with the experts, the first characteristic or specificity that emerges concerns standard programme training. "There is a certain disharmony... a mismatch between the programmes offered in the standard way... and the realities of the environment" (CJA1, 7). This is clearly a tacit mismatch between training programmes and the contextual and situational realities of the community. This standardisation of training programmes leads to a certain dilution in the andragogical activities of the experts, the effects of which are not necessarily achieved, to the great detriment of the correlation between social dynamics and the training system (Monteil, 1985). In fact, the unfortunate dichotomy that emerges from this disharmony is highly detrimental to the dynamics of young employability and, above all, to the implementation of the entrepreneurial spirit that results from it. "For example, if you train young entrepreneurs in the mobile phone sector...call-boxes when the area is not regularly covered by electricity...it is obvious that no jobs will take off in this sector...". (CJA3, 5). It therefore becomes clear that such a lack of conformity means that the above-mentioned inadequacy cannot but result in the training objectives not being achieved. Another specific feature of entrepreneurial andragogy is the training of young people who already have initial training in a specific field, but whose results are slow to follow, not because of the andragogues' inexperience, but rather because of the realities of the environment (Merieu, 1995). In other words, in these activities and in these places, there is a kind of maladjustment in the treatment that obliterates those applicants who are less in need of any training than of support of a completely different kind, particularly financial support. And even when these young people do receive such subsidies, it takes a long time for the results to be felt, not necessarily because of inexperience or unpreparedness, but rather because of the inappropriateness of the environment in which the project is implemented. "Many young people with initial training... carpentry, bricklaying, bakery, IH... have benefited from government aid without success... This is the consequence not of the training received but of the unsuitability of the environment" (CJA1, 13). This was often justified by the fact that these projects were carried out in environments that were inappropriate and therefore incapable of receiving them. It is difficult to build a carpentry workshop or a bakery in a locality that suffers from constant power cuts. "How many young people in the village are able to get tailor-made clothes from a dressmaker? "... To pay for the expertise of a trained bricklayer...". (CJA4, 11). Indeed, even young adults who have adapted positively to their working environment have

experienced real difficulties due to local residents who have not necessarily supported the projects, finding them either expensive or incongruous. Éla (2006) goes into some detail about the real social foundations of economic success in relation to youth entrepreneurship in Africa, when he refers in a non-negotiable way to a certain expertise resulting from the training initially undertaken by the young people, so as to form a granite base for adjusting subsequent aims.

The second specificity of entrepreneurial andragogy in these environments is that training is far-fetched if we assume that entrepreneurial training programmes presuppose that young people have certain fundamental attitudes and managerial skills (Carre, D'Halluin, Clenet and Poisson, 1999; Barbot and Camatari, 1999). Indeed, many andragogues experience abundant difficulties in the course of their activities due to the non-existence or scarcity of young people with prior training in any field whatsoever. Most of the young people in these disadvantaged areas come from poor families who have not been able to train them for an appropriate trade. "We don't have the resources to teach them everything in such a short space of time... Most of the talented ones, when we do find them, go and work elsewhere..." (CJA3, 9). This seems to be the logical consequence of the grievances raised above, which lie in the current and conjectural incompatibility between the training received, the preferred environment and the projects implemented. We might also point out here that some of this training is done by forceps, given the prior and/or initial inability of young people to acquire it. Their lack of management skills or technical aptitude does not really predispose them to benefit from the entrepreneurship training offered by andragogues (Luttringer and Willems, 1998).

The final characteristic and/or specificity that arises from our analysis results from a two-speed training with regard to the types of entrepreneurs (CEREQ, 1996) that result from this training. Indeed, in the light of the data collected in the field, it is quite clear that the young entrepreneurs who manage to make a name for themselves in the field can be divided mainly into two groups with very distinct characteristics: "Subsistence entrepreneurs...more numerous..., engage in entrepreneurship to ensure their daily bread..., and the workforce... is generally family-based...". (CJA 2, 12). In fact, it appears that the choice of such an approach is based on the fact that it is more beneficial to surround oneself with close family members by virtue of their loyalty, their submission and, above all, the fact that they can work without making any great demands in terms of wages. Moreover, this first category seems to be the most numerous, as it probably requires modest initial capital and constitutes a non-coercive workforce in terms of expertise and sometimes even salary value. Hence the tendency in such cases to opt for fields of activity with a strong informal flavour: food processing, crafts, weaving, shoemaking, hairdressing, dyeing, etc., IT, office secretarial work. Everything, or almost everything, that feeds the informal sector goes (Ulysea 2018; Dutz, 2021). In contrast, the latter, which are visibly more formalist because of the huge amounts of capital that their businesses attract, seem to be

more credible, with activities that are more established over time, and a fairly strict organisation of their managerial models. "The latter ... few in number ..., are disruptive entrepreneurs ... job creators ..., they contribute more to the country's economic growth" (CJA2, 13). They have an obligation to achieve results because of the nature of their funds and businesses, which are no longer necessarily under their sole control - quite the contrary. Their employees no longer necessarily come under the sole control of the family, and they must also have a certain amount of professional experience to justify their position in the business.

➤ *Strengths and Weaknesses of Entrepreneurial Andragogy in Empowering Young People*

The State does not really have many assets for broad-based entrepreneurial andragogy, between the existence of appropriate entrepreneurial training policies and the availability of andragogues. State policies in this area are the expression of certain administrations such as the "Ministry of Youth and Civic Education (MINJEC), the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS), the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family...(MINPROFF)". CPJA1, 1. It should be pointed out, however, that this far from exhaustive list does not take into account the many other public and private players whose activities are not insignificant. In fact, "the State implements numerous projects aimed at empowering young people: ... :... Youth aid project in rural and urban areas (PAJER-U) ... the national volunteer program (PNV) ... National youth integration fund, CNPJ ... » CPJA1, 2. It should be pointed out in all respects that while it seems clear that each of these programmes has equipped many young people and boosted their sense of entrepreneurship, thereby creating many jobs, the fact remains that taken systemically on the macro basis of the State, they seem rather limited in view of the ratios between supply and demand.

However, in addition to the role played by the public authorities through their regalian structures, our results show the availability of a qualified workforce dedicated to this task. In fact, the state regularly trains youth workers in general (CPJA-CJA) and specialists in entrepreneurship using new approaches (Haeuw, 1998), who spread out over the various regions of the country as part of multiple and multi-domain assignments. In fact, whether they are senior youth and activity advisers or simply youth and activity advisers, they are all dedicated to this august task in their ranks and grades, having to serve wherever they are needed according to the demand expressed on the ground. "Many youth and activity advisers ... and also senior advisers ... are trained annually and transferred to various ministries ... with the role ... of training young people" (CPJA2, 7). It should be pointed out that while these andragogues are masters of the art of theoretical design of projects in workshops in government departments and other decentralised services, they are also formidable field agents responsible for approaching young people and contributing to their training. In fact, these andragogues are responsible for "accompanying young people in difficulty... who generally have no social or family assistance... and for rearming their moral compass... to provide support for their social

integration and empowerment" (CPJA1, 13). One of the main characteristics of these localities is precisely the fact that most of the young people here live in precarious conditions, which makes their daily lives an exploit. As a result, many of them find themselves without a parent at a very early age due to the early loss of their parents, or due to the adventures they embark on at a very early age in order to help close relatives or descendants, or those left behind in other localities. The need to provide training for these young adults to supplement the poor school education that many of them show is highly beneficial. Whatever the field of activity of these young adults, the State, through its trained andragogues, has the expertise required to train them, or at least to subcontract such training where necessary (Aumont and Mesnier, 1992), in accordance with the rule that "no-one has a monopoly on knowledge". In fact, it should be pointed out for the sake of illustration that the expertise of these andragogues sometimes has nothing in common with the disciplinary field of the young people they meet in the field, and that these andragogues are very often obliged to train themselves if they are to achieve convincing results. This is a necessary approach if they are to connect with the target population and achieve their aims. Whatever the case, and over and above initial training provided by andragogues (COPAS, 1995), their role goes beyond that, in particular by providing "support..., monitoring and evaluation... because if the grown-ups manage badly, how much more will the young people?" (CPJA2, 5). Thus, it is becoming more than necessary and highly appropriate not to limit ourselves to simply providing training for these young adults, but rather to accompany them on a daily basis through appropriate monitoring that will enable them to avoid any pitfalls that may stand in their way.

On the other hand, the range of weaknesses and other shortcomings in entrepreneurial andragogy's ability to achieve its objectives is not only systemic, but also endemic, given the difficulties involved in the emergence of a new entrepreneurial figure in Africa in general and in Cameroon in particular (Amougou, 2015); but also given the obligation to match education, training and work (Champy-Remoussenard, 2015). Firstly, it is systemic, as there are many ambivalences in the normative and codification processes relating to adult education, which are not conducive to achieving the system's objectives to the full. Secondly, it is endemic, as the adult educators who are responsible for carrying out training tasks are not specifically trained or experts in everything. That's why they sometimes have to subcontract. As a result, a large part of the technical side of their activities is carried out not by themselves, but by technicians in the field: "We are not trained in crafts, carpentry or brickwork, IH...I have to call in a real bricklayer, carpenter or tailor...". (CJA4, 16). This evidence of the tacit and/or explicit inadequacies of andragogues thus shows that they are not necessarily equipped to the best of their abilities, or at least with the skills likely to enable them to best empower young adults. In addition to this lack of training for trainers, the ratio between supply and demand must also be criticised: "there are many trainers for young people, because they are trained annually and put back onto the national market... But

compared to demand, it has to be said that a lot remains to be done" (CPJA1, 13). As noted at the start of this research, young people under the age of 35 make up more than half of Cameroon's population. This pattern is in no way contradicted in our field of study, where young people are in the majority and demand is high. So while the supply of adult education training remains real, its proportions are so minute as to be non-existent if not insignificant.

In addition to the inadequate supply of adult educators, the other inadequacy, if not total absence, is that of funding, which is eminently lacking in these open, multi-resource courses (D'Halluin and Haeuw, 1995). Indeed, there is a great deal of uncertainty between theory and practice. In the patent case, the theory that can be considered as training, must inevitably be backed up by funding to make the project a reality, which is never necessarily the case: "Training is one thing... But getting the activity up and running is another because of a lack of money... It's true that the State, through many projects, funds young people... but demand, as everywhere else, always outstrips supply..." (CJA, 16). (CJA1, 16). The problem of funding, far from being a minor one, is in fact one of the levers without which the state's entire adult education policy is likely to be haphazard and unable to develop to good effect the autonomy (Eneau, 2008) so highly prized in terms of empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Another weakness, and not the least in terms of the reaction of our respondents, is the environmental hazards which, in more ways than one, do not always work in favour of entrepreneurship. In fact, there is a non-negligible number of habits and customs, opportunities and other potentials offered by nature or by the geographical position of a given locality, which help to stimulate or, conversely, to slow down the entrepreneurial dynamic and, even further upstream, the adult training dynamic: "The mentality of the local people is such that they feel that buying sewn clothes is a luxury" (CJA3, 22). In fact, in every respect, the standard of living of the population, especially young people in these areas, provides more information than any other reality. The prevailing precariousness is such that the above attitudes should come as no surprise. What's more, "many of those who wanted to go into the craft industry have had to give up... or move to other rural areas... for lack of buyers here..." (CJA2, 17); "Many bricklayers have gone to work in town... because there are no markets here... People rely on family labour..." (CJA1, 24). It is clear here that the reasons for this are less to do with the training courses than with the fact that they are ill-suited to the context, or even with the precariousness of the lives of the people, whose appetites are still mainly limited to the daily search for food and drink.

#### ➤ *Strategies for a More Empowering and Capable Andragogy*

According to our respondents, the strategies for revitalising andragogy in order to achieve better results are threefold: adapting training processes to suit the context, improving cooperation between the public and private sectors, and improving funding systems. In fact, the readaptation of training processes to suit specific contexts is

particularly relevant with the introduction of new teaching-learning and training channels, in this case NICTs (Linard, 1990; Annot, 1996). According to many, these new training and learning tools are a considerable asset capable of boosting the adult training movement, and all the impetus that contributes to stimulating its output: "The use of NICTs ... in our cycles ... and training and monitoring processes for young adults, ... is ... likely to lighten our task ... and make it possible to get around the difficulty of the ratios between supply and demand ... for trainers" (CJA3, 20). In fact, one of the advantages of introducing digitisation into these training processes would be to dematerialise the training of young adults by enabling adult educators, for example, to train more young people from different localities at the same time, without actually being there. "Admittedly, these localities suffer from a major lack of electricity,... but more and more young people are interested in computers... with all their positive effects..." (CJA1, 27). It is clear that many young people are now familiar with digital tools and are aware of the various advantages they offer. They do not hesitate to travel enormous distances if necessary to acquire one or to be able to charge it. So, whether from a pedagogical point of view (Gouvernement du Québec, 2010a) or in terms of innovation (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005; De Blignieres-Legeraud, 1998), andragogy is being revitalised because it is breaking down training distances by reaching more young people. Draper (1998) rightly or wrongly considers it to be the tool by excellence through which the greatest number of people can be reached for training purposes, and a sufficiently appropriate channel for distance learning. The advantage here is that it significantly reduces the efforts of adult educators, makes them more present with young adults and, above all, breaks down the geographical barriers that existed between them and young people.

Collaboration and dialogue between the private and public sectors are the second panacea in these strategies, since as the tasks become more numerous and the population grows, the State tends to become overwhelmed: "The State cannot do everything... It is in its interest to surround itself with the private expertise of partners... capable of supporting its prerogatives in the training of young entrepreneurs..." (CJA 2, 16). "Collaboration between NGOs and other private partners is a great asset that can enable the State to devolve and even decentralise its powers" (CJA3, 24). In fact, it is a cliché to state that collaboration between the public and private sectors, and between institutional and non-institutional partners, is always dependent on added value that catalyses the achievement of the objectives of training, capacity building and empowerment of young people. This is all the more important given the extreme mobility (Danvers, 2016) of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, who very often feel obliged to migrate to urban centres in search of a better life. As a result, the training offered to this category of young people is very often lost because, far from enriching the locality in which the young person received his or her training, it instead goes on to enrich a completely different locality as the young people migrate.

Improving the conditions of access to capital therefore becomes the key element, given the maxim that "money is the sinews of war". Indeed, even though entrepreneurial andragogy no longer has much to prove in terms of the spirit of emulation that it inspires (Verzat, 2012); and even more so in terms of the quantity and quality of the young people trained in various fields, the fact remains that many of them remain amorphous, mainly because of the lack of funding: "The State funds many young people to carry out projects..., but many fail because sometimes the funding is not targeted at the best profiles..." (CJA1,18). The State's miscasting in the choice of young people to support or to be supported is in fact a major source of the failure of these young people to carry out the projects they claim to have. In fact, and indirectly, the wrong trajectory or misappropriation of aid is also blamed here. It has been observed that many of those who receive state aid to finance their projects are not always the best trained, and many of the best do not necessarily receive such support.

Furthermore, with regard to the modest or inadequate resources available to the State to subsidise its young entrepreneurs, "The State must appeal to international partners ... and use this aid effectively ... to the best of its ability" (CJA4, 25). In a cryptic way, our respondents at this level are obviously alluding to the possibility of misappropriation of funds initially allocated to young people, but which, depending on the geopolitical ups and downs, are sometimes diverted elsewhere. It is clear that certain circumstances, such as the COVID 19 pandemic, have forced many governments to divert many of the budgets initially allocated to empowering young people to the fight against the pandemic. However, capitalising on the support provided by the diaspora, private operators and national and international financial backers, are all funding niches likely to generate an upturn in youth entrepreneurship: "The contribution of countries like Senegal in funding the projects of young Senegalese is immense... Cameroon can learn from them" (CJA 1, 16). Equipping adult educators in every sense (Pineau and Solar, 1980) is also an important strategy for generating added value in the acquisition and empowerment of disadvantaged young people, for better social integration. The merit of such an approach would be that adult educators (D'Halluin and Poisson, 1990; Tremblay and Hrimech, 2003) could be given prior and upstream training to enable them to take better charge of learners in the area of entrepreneurship.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to understand the main correlation between andragogy and youth entrepreneurship in disadvantaged areas, based on an analysis of the discourse of andragogists and the literature on entrepreneurial andragogy. Whether we are talking about standard training courses, far-fetched courses or even double-speed courses, the characteristics and other specific features of entrepreneurial andragogy generate strengths and weaknesses that call for the adoption of appropriate strategies to consolidate the various processes of empowering young people to become entrepreneurs. In fact,

whether we are talking about the theoretical aspect (Elias and Merriam, 2005) or the practical aspect (Laot and Lescure, 2006), we can see that the modern and even contemporary conception of andragogy can only take into account a strategic synchronisation of the two elements to maximise its effects on entrepreneurship. One of the correlated elements in the failure of entrepreneurial andragogy, as indicated in our results, lies substantially in the clearly mentioned distinction between the theoretical and otherwise practical aspects, which are not necessarily complementary, but rather in conflict.

All government strategies aimed at alleviating the shortcomings identified must therefore be based on a logic of continuity that gives pride of place to ongoing training for adult educators (Government of Quebec, 2002), which can provide them with a sufficiently appropriate framework to normalise all the contextual and even situational difficulties encountered in the course of their work. Similarly, the lack of professionalism on the part of a large fringe of andragogues creates, willy-nilly, a formal defect which has a negative impact on the results initially predefined for entrepreneurial andragogy, given the importance of such professionalism (Wagner, 2002). The latter remains the barometer by excellence for maximum achievement of the objectives initially set in the context of adult training, with the various targets shining precisely because of a lack of culture and professionalism, which are circumstantially compensated for by the culture and professionalism of the adult educators dedicated to the training work.

If we also start from the principle that the company is made up of a number of elements which are sometimes very heterogeneous by virtue of the different "social worlds" that make it up (Osty, Sainsaulieu and Uhalde, 2007), then we realise the imperative that lies in training trainers to maximise their output and achieve the predefined objectives in the best possible way (Tremblay and Hrimech, 2003). Far from being a simple challenge in this context, the training of trainers is part of a certain strategy, the basis of which lies in the results and/or performance of the training offered. The major consequence of such an initiative would be to eradicate certain weaknesses identified in this area by elevating the adult educator not to the rank of simple trainer, but rather to that of empowerer by enabling the trainee to self-train (Tremblay, 2003). Furthermore, our results show that one of the major weaknesses of andragogues is the training of non-graduates, whose mastery of the methodological canons in the art of entrepreneurial management is sometimes a feat, with a few exceptions. In fact, the training of trainers mentioned above is once again a timely panacea for empowering non-graduates (Mégret, 2016), one of whose strategies is precisely to get them to 'think about' their own 'experience' (Mezirow, 2001), whatever the external contribution of the andragogues (Eneau, 2005; Merriam, 2001) and the critical eye likely to add value (Germain & Jacquemin, 2017).

Ultimately, as regards the digitisation of training and its inability to be popularised given the difficulties inherent in our research environments, it should nonetheless be noted

that, like Mr Jourdain who wrote prose without knowing it, some adult educators are nonetheless providing distance training through digital letter exchanges, educational talk sessions and entrepreneurial guidance and counselling (Vanderspelden, 1995). For this purpose, we now need to formalise open distance learning (ODL), which is the only way of boosting the entrepreneurial skills of young adults, and thus popularising employability in these disadvantaged areas.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the opinions of our respondents, our research reveals a number of characteristics and specificities of entrepreneurial andragogy in disadvantaged environments, which give them many strengths as well as weaknesses. If it is true, as Martin Luther King said, that "no nation is born great, the greatness of a nation (being) the work of its citizens", then the work of adult education carried out by governments, and Cameroon in particular, remains a public service. So whether it is a question of learning to undertake (Fayolle, 2012) or learning to empower oneself (Eneau, 2016), 'entrepreneurial' andragogy in this case is now firmly established as the therapy (Blais et al., 1994) by excellence in the emergence processes of African societies (Amougou, 2015). The desirability of this kind of training is no longer in doubt, given the salutary effect it has on human societies and the emphasis that should henceforth be placed on its implementation (Dumazedier, 1985).

In this study, we looked at the correlation between entrepreneurial andragogy and entrepreneurship/youth employability in disadvantaged environments. The aim was to identify and describe the characteristics of entrepreneurial andragogy in disadvantaged environments, to present its strengths and weaknesses in the process of empowering young adults seeking employment and, finally, to propose solutions for an andragogy that provides more jobs. At the end of this reflection, we can say that young adults from the above-mentioned backgrounds do not feel particularly comfortable with this training, which they appreciate, but which does not necessarily get them out of the endemic impoverishment that is part of their daily lot. While the State is showing real dynamism in training andragogues responsible for training young people in difficulty, the same dynamism is not really observed in terms of granting aid and other funding likely to enable these young adults to put this training into practice by creating a business or a job.

There are, however, a number of limitations to this work, which makes no claim to infallibility despite our best efforts. In fact, the modesty of the data collection and analysis tools, in particular the non-use of statistical tests, which could inevitably have added a certain amount of value to this research; the same goes for our sample, which could have been larger for greater credibility. A larger sample would have been more reliable and would have provided a basis for representativeness and, therefore, greater validity. Finally, limiting our research framework to the disadvantaged areas of East Cameroon also limited our understanding and analysis of the phenomenon and its

impact on society. However, these real and obvious shortcomings are not such as to dilute the serenity of this work, the contribution of which makes it possible to broaden the field of knowledge relating to "entrepreneurial" andragogy, but rather to develop the aptitudes and attitudes of andragogists in terms of training, monitoring and support, through the identification of the strengths and weaknesses which emanate from them. Our hope in all respects is that the results of this study will inspire analysis and reflection among specialists and experts in the educational sciences in general, and andragogues in particular, whatever the field. Admittedly, there are limitations to this work, notably the small size of the sample and the limited geographical scope of the survey. However, the fact remains that the conclusions reached in this work are likely to constitute and generate an empirical basis for the analysis and interpretation of a problem with a contemporary resonance.

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