

Enhancing territorial competitiveness: the role of local governance and resource mobilization in Moroccan cluster development

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Résumé

Cette recherche analyse le phénomène d'agglomération des entreprises au Maroc en identifiant les stratégies de polarisation industrielle. Il examine l'impact du marketing territorial, de la gouvernance locale et de la mobilisation des ressources sur le développement régional. Les modèles d'agglomération montrent comment la concentration géographique et la collaboration entre entreprises et institutions améliorent la performance économique et l'innovation. Ces approches, inspirées des expériences internationales, visent à renforcer la compétitivité territoriale et améliorer l'attractivité régionale.

Après la fin du programme d'ajustement structurel, l'économie marocaine, qui était axée sur l'exploitation des ressources naturelles et la production traditionnelle, a eu besoin de réformes structurelles pour stimuler le développement industriel. Le Maroc a cherché à moderniser son industrie en se concentrant sur l'innovation et en développant des clusters et technopoles pour améliorer la compétitivité territoriale. Les politiques de l'émergence industrielle visaient à dynamiser les secteurs clés et à attirer les investissements. Cependant, les défis de gouvernance et de financement persistent, et des efforts continus sont nécessaires pour parvenir au redéploiement industriel du pays.

La gouvernance locale joue un rôle crucial dans le marketing territorial en attirant les entreprises grâce à l'amélioration des services publics et au renforcement de la présence institutionnelle. Les villes tirent parti de leur statut pour attirer divers acteurs et développer des réseaux coopératifs qui renforcent leur attrait économique. La mobilisation des ressources, y compris la formation professionnelle, l'urbanisme et l'optimisation sectorielle, est essentielle pour renforcer cette attractivité. Un environnement favorable, soutenu par une infrastructure adéquate et des politiques favorables à l'entrepreneuriat, améliore le développement économique et les perspectives d'investissement.

Mots clés: pôles de compétitivité; clusters; positionnement marketing du territoire; acteurs territoriaux; marketing territorial; stratégie marketing.

Abstract

This research analyzes the phenomenon of business agglomeration in Morocco by identifying industrial polarization strategies and the theory of agglomeration economies. It examines the impact of territorial marketing, local governance, and resource mobilization on regional development.

The business network develops spontaneously to create lasting relationships based on cooperation and innovation. Agglomeration models demonstrate how geographic concentration and collaboration between businesses and institutions enhance economic performance and innovation. These approaches, inspired by international experiences, aim to strengthen territorial competitiveness and improve regional attractiveness.

After the end of the structural adjustment program, the Moroccan economy, which had been focused on natural resource exploitation and traditional production, needed structural reform to boost industrial development. Since 1995, Morocco has sought to modernize its industry by focusing on innovation and developing clusters and technopoles to enhance territorial competitiveness. Policies such as the Emergence Plan and the National Pact for Industrial Emergence aimed to energize key sectors and attract investments. However, governance and financing challenges persist, and continuous efforts are required to achieve the country's industrial redeployment.

Local governance plays a crucial role in territorial marketing by attracting businesses through improved public services and strengthened institutional presence. Cities leverage their status to attract diverse actors and develop cooperative networks that enhance their economic appeal. Resource mobilization, including skills training, urban planning, and sector optimization, is essential for reinforcing this attractiveness. A supportive environment, backed by adequate infrastructure and favorable entrepreneurship policies, enhances economic development and investment prospects.

Keywords: *poles of competitiveness; clusters; marketing positioning of territory; territorial actors; territorial marketing; marketing strategy.*

INTRODUCTION

Territorial development approaches based on the concentration of economic activities gained substantial attention in the late 1980s following the loss of territorial competitiveness in the United States. These approaches manifest in concepts such as industrial districts (Becattini, 1989), innovative milieus (Maillat et al., 1993), and clusters (Porter, 1998), inspired by the territorial intelligence of industrialized countries, including the United States and European nations.

Moreover, clusters are seen as the most effective management model for these agglomerations due to their strategies of cooperation, partnership, territorialization, and specialization in business activities. This cooperative strategy positions clusters within the framework of research and innovation policies. Clusters provide companies with a competitive edge in the face of intense competition, prompting local actors to continually implement this new industrial policy to enhance the attractiveness of their territory.

Competitiveness poles and clusters represent a shift towards a new industrial policy (NPI) based on innovation and invention, creating an environment that fosters scientific research, technology, and local interactions among actors within the same territory. These approaches, developed as part of territorial development policies, are characterized by agglomeration economies aimed at creating a cooperative climate for scientific research, innovation, and invention.

Inspired by pioneering European experiences, the goal of establishing competitiveness poles was to create a territorially strong economy with dynamic qualities capable of

improving both qualitative and quantitative growth, fostering cooperation, social cohesion, and employment.

European perspectives on clusters explain territorial competitiveness by their ability to be present in international networks of knowledge and innovation and to meet the economic, ethnic, and cultural expectations and aspirations of individuals and businesses. This perspective also emphasizes the importance of creating relationships with economic actors beyond the cluster.

The scientific contribution of the author lies in presenting the conviction regarding the role of local governance and resource mobilization in enhancing the marketing positioning of clusters and competitiveness poles. The study and analysis of the Moroccan case support this conviction by providing a concrete example. The transition and industrial redeployment highlight the crucial role of the state in shaping the marketing positioning of territories through governance and resource mobilization.

I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This scientific research aims to deepen the understanding of the business agglomeration phenomenon in Morocco. Initially, this study will identify Moroccan industrial polarization strategies. We have utilized agglomeration economies theory complemented by specialized literature (books, ministerial reports, internal documents from clusters, MedZ, etc.). After presenting the concepts of agglomeration economies, the main contribution of our research is to present a conviction regarding the role of marketing positioning, as well as the contributions of local governance and resource mobilization.

Our research fits within the conceptual framework of agglomeration effects, as well as the contributions of governance and marketing positioning in territorial development.

The article is structured as follows:

- The first section explores the contribution of territorial marketing to local governance through the marketing positioning of the territory.
- The second section addresses the evolution and dynamics of clusters and competitiveness poles.
- The third section explains and analyzes the cluster policy in Morocco.
- The fourth and final section elaborates on the authors' contributions regarding local governance and resource mobilization for strengthening the marketing positioning strategy of the territory.

II. TERRITORIAL MARKETING: A STRATEGIC ASSET FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE

At first glance, the concept of "territorial development" has created competition among countries, regions, and territories, driven by territorial economic intelligence. This competition has led many regional actors to focus on developing their territories and generating regional dynamism.

2.1. The emergence of territorial rivalry

A range of economic and political phenomena have given rise to the concept of territorial rivalry, including globalization and world integration. Consequently, territories have become innovative and wealth-creating spaces due to the multiplicity of actors involved and the differing goals and activities they bring.

A key historical phenomenon is the decline in competitiveness experienced by the United States in the 1980s, which was a precursor to the rise of territories. Michael Porter introduced the concept of clusters, which involves collaboration and partnership among universities, training institutions, public authorities, research structures, and funding agencies, aiming to foster a climate of collaboration and innovation.

2.2. The territory as an innovative concept

The geographical notion of "territory or space" emerged in the early 1970s, shaped by territorial and economic organization, which inspired a number of researchers in territorial economics (Raffestin, 1986; Beccatini, 1989; Lévesque, Klein & Fontan, 1998; Lartigue, Largier, Soulard & Tarquis, 2008). Space became a key factor for implementing innovation policies. The spontaneous concentration of companies inspired many researchers to explore territorial economics through industrial districts (Marshall, 1890), localized production systems (Garofoli, 1992), clusters (Porter, 1990), and competitiveness poles (Lartigue et al., 2008), highlighting the significance of these economic phenomena (Caron, Angeon, & Lardon, 2006).

These phenomena provide territorial bases in the form of firm implantation platforms, advantages, and responses to competition. Agglomeration forces enable companies to establish partnerships, collaborations, and rivalries, creating an environment of knowledge economy, innovation, and invention (Lartigue et al., 2008).

Territories, as geographical spaces, have the potential to develop innovative practices in management and research. Leading, particularly developed, countries have previously focused on creating innovative environments to enhance the competitiveness of their economic actors. The driving force behind territorial development is economic emergence, enabling regions to address disruptions and changes.

On one hand, the territory plays a central role in the decentralization of power and in fostering innovation. On the other hand, territories seek to attract innovation providers, and through reciprocity, both the territory and its actors fulfill the mission of innovation.

2.3. The role of marketing positioning

Moreover, "Cities have been using marketing techniques for decades" (Pecot F. & Barnier V., 2015). However, the nature of the methods and operational actions raises questions, as marketing is a discipline that evolves over time and place. Specifically, territorial marketing, as defined by the American Marketing Association (AMA, 2008), predominantly addresses large urban projects (LUPs) and major urban developments (MUDs) (Stefan B., 2003).

III. THE EVOLUTION OF AGGLOMERATION PHENOMENA

These development approaches have been implemented to address economic and social crises (Rocha, 2004), becoming a politico-economic solution due to their impact on business survival, regional economic development, and territorial development (Rocha, 2004).

3.1. The concept of business networks

Business networks develop spontaneously among companies with the aim of creating enduring relationships based on cooperation, partnership, and mutual knowledge and trust (D. Maillat, 1995). A business network is defined by both formal and informal management modes that link a range of actors to build a cluster of firms benefiting from an innovation ecosystem and synergy. The territory itself is seen as an innovative element that facilitates the development of this network, with companies, due to their role as actors, contributing to innovation through reciprocity and mutual support. Particularly, SMEs play a leading role in establishing innovative networks through the projects they undertake and their capacity for invention and innovation.

The business network represents a force that prompts the state and local governance to view this concentration of firms as an opportunity due to their establishment, project implementation, innovation contribution, and the ecosystem they create, all of which enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of the territory. This network serves as a resource for the territory, established according to the spontaneous will of the companies, a concept supported by literature that suggests SMEs become stronger within these agglomeration forces.

3.2. Agglomeration phenomena aimed at "growth"

3.2.1. Industrial district

Alfred Marshall developed the premise that the geographic concentration of sector-specific firms enhances economic performance and territorial development (Bakala H., 2017). Pioneering clusters such as Emilia-Romagna, Hollywood, Silicon Valley in California, Silicon Wadi in Tel Aviv, Sophia Antipolis in France, and high-tech clusters in India and Great Britain have inspired other regions worldwide (Bakala H., 2017).

Territorial development approaches emerged spontaneously through cooperation and collaboration among regional actors, leading to agglomerations and concentrations of

economic activities (Chabault D., 2007). The industrial district, or Marshallian district, first introduced by Alfred Marshall in 1898 in his work "Principles of Political Economy," was a concept addressing new industrial policies by establishing industrial platforms for firm implantation. This model emerged in the U.S. and Europe during the 1970s and 1980s, driven by the Italian experience with the "industrial organization of the Third Italy," characterized by the concentration of SMEs with significant financial resources and low-cost labor.

The industrial district is defined as "production systems, geographically defined, characterized by a large number of small and medium firms involved in various stages of producing a homogeneous product" (Marshall, 1890). Furthermore, concentration is necessary through networks of small and medium enterprises with the same specialization and profession, having both commercial and non-commercial relationships (Courlet, 2001).

3.2.2. Localized production system (SPL)

Following the Italian experience with industrial districts, another form of agglomeration was introduced, known as the SPL or Localized Production System. Developed in France, the SPL is defined as "a particular productive organization localized in a territory generally corresponding to a labor basin. This organization functions as a network of interdependencies among productive units with similar or complementary activities that divide labor (production or service companies, research centers, training organizations, technology transfer and monitoring centers, etc.)" (DATAR, 2002).

While the SPL shares many characteristics with the industrial district, such as collaboration among actors and proximity-based economies, it is distinct in three main ways: network integration, learning dynamics, and territorial anchoring (Caron et al., 2006). Unlike the industrial district, the SPL can include firms of all sizes, not necessarily specializing in a single industry.

The primary contribution of this form of agglomeration is that it encourages all forms of cooperation to enhance the performance and competitiveness of local firms and the attractiveness of the territory. The cooperative spirit is significantly present in SPLs, supported by the culture created by local actors in a public-private partnership framework.

3.3. Agglomeration phenomena aimed at "innovation"

Initially, the two agglomeration models promoting innovation share similarities in structure and partnership forms, though the main difference lies in the stakeholders' willingness. Clusters typically pursue the partners' will, while competitiveness poles are often imposed by public authorities. This convergence is evident at the initial stage of creating a competitiveness pole, with the management and administration mode remaining consistent afterward.

3.3.1. Competitiveness poles

Economic jargon defines competitiveness poles as a new industrial policy aimed at optimizing the competitiveness of companies with a focus on innovation. This competitiveness is characterized by companies' ability to compete beyond their poles. The contribution of these poles to companies is evident through mobilizing various actors and activating several mechanisms available to these firms. This action maximizes a climate of territorial economic intelligence (Matheron, 2009).

In this context, competitiveness poles can be defined as associations of businesses, training institutions, research centers, and other organizations aimed at establishing partnerships and synergies. They take the form of public policies designed to optimize innovative projects and companies to enhance a territory (Patrick T., 2007).

The primary goal of this new industrial policy was to involve the concept of innovation and intelligence, exploiting knowledge. For developing countries, scientific research and knowledge exploitation are key pillars of economic and territorial development (Francis K. and Régis L-T., 2009).

Competitiveness poles significantly impact territorial development as they are crucial elements in the attractiveness and competitiveness of the territory, serving as a means for locating new firms and sustaining existing ones. Competitiveness poles are a state-initiated policy, led by local actors and governors, with regions implementing the projects associated with these poles.

Previous research highlights the ambiguity in implementing this new industrial policy at the regional and territorial levels and the behavior of governors regarding its applicability. This underscores the potential impact of territorial marketing positioning. Competitiveness poles rely on "research and development" and strong territorial synergy.

3.3.2. Clusters

Clusters are the Anglo-Saxon definition of competitiveness poles. A cluster is a coherent and autonomous group of businesses, research centers, universities, and local financial institutions located in the same territory, intending to establish synergies and cooperation networks for technology transfer and innovation (OCO Consulting, 2005). The European experience with clusters demonstrates their role in restructuring territorial economic dynamics (OCO Consulting, 2005). Clusters contribute to establishing agglomeration economies and aim to create innovative projects.

Clusters in developed countries experience remarkable and rapid growth due to the exploitation of governmental territorial dynamism, innovation, technology, and strong territorial agglomeration. These agglomerations are crucial assets in territorial restructuring and national and international visibility, which translates into the attractiveness of firms, careers, households, and professions, fostering cooperation and innovation.

The term "cluster" originated from the spontaneous initiative of industrial firms seeking the benefits of proximity economies and commercial and non-commercial relationships. A cluster is characterized by an industrial ecosystem combining cooperation and competition.

IV. DYNAMICS AND CHALLENGES OF CLUSTERS AND COMPETITIVENESS POLES IN TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

The concept of "territory" has given rise to territorial development approaches aimed at leveraging the wealth of each region. Each territory has unique resources that enhance its development, including natural resources (such as energy, nature, wildlife, flora, and more). Governance and management practices also present opportunities at the managerial level, enabling local actors to optimize the territory as an economic, political, and administrative space.

Territorial development phenomena have led to the emergence of concepts such as the industrial district (Beccatini, 1979), the localized production system (Courlet, 2002), and the innovative milieu (Maillat, Quévin, and Senn, 1993). Among these phenomena, clusters and competitiveness poles play significant roles in economic development and encourage the creation of new enterprises. Inspired by the Silicon Valley model, clusters and competitiveness poles promote the establishment of businesses through start-ups, involving a range of active actors including universities, research centers, local stakeholders, both large and small enterprises, credit and financing institutions, lawyers, consultants, and intermediaries in various fields such as science, technology, health, business, and marketing.

The role of the state in the context of clusters and competitiveness poles lies in involving both public and private actors and mobilizing scientific research, technology, and innovation to enhance the competitiveness of a territory. The state, through incubators, provides small and medium-sized enterprises with essential services to launch their projects, including legal, commercial, communication, and marketing services. The engagement of researchers is justified by the creation of small firms in the form of start-ups, supported by guidance, encouragement, and funding. According to the Silicon Valley model, the innovation law is defined by the creation of companies by young researchers and engineers who bring ambitious motivations in science and technology.

V. CLUSTER POLICY IN MOROCCO

5.1. Observation of the evolution of territorial economic dynamics in Morocco

Initially, at the end of the structural adjustment program, Morocco's economy relied heavily on the exploitation of natural resources and traditional production methods. The industry lacked strategic direction, which slowed the pace of economic development. It became clear that structural reform was necessary to maximize industrial development and the Moroccan economy (Amine R. 2016). By the beginning of 1995, the Moroccan government sought to identify emerging sectors that could enhance Moroccan industry and optimize the country's economy (Amine R. 2016). In this context, utilizing the territorial space became essential, as the territory itself is a significant asset. The challenge was

territorial competitiveness, and existing literature highlighted the need for cooperation within territories, especially in sectors driving innovation and technology. Morocco therefore adopted a policy of industrial platforms and technopoles, as well as a strategy for labeling clusters to foster an innovative environment.

5.2. Moroccan Experience with Agglomeration Economics

The need to develop the Moroccan economy has led to various economic development policies, culminating in the establishment of competitiveness poles and clusters. The current aim is not just the development of the Moroccan economy but the territorial economic maximization through the establishment of labeled clusters. The updated goal is to enhance territorial competitiveness and attractiveness.

Clusters and competitiveness poles play a crucial role in bringing together companies, academics, research institutions, administration, and other actors within a specific territory. This strategy aims to create an environment of cooperation and innovation that optimizes both the territory's attractiveness and the competitiveness of enterprises, while exploiting local expertise.

Morocco embraced cluster policy in 2009 with the launch of the Morocco Innovation Initiative and the National Pact for Industrial Emergence. The goal, as defined in the literature, was to foster innovation, knowledge exchange, and the utilization of skills. The BCG (Boston Consulting Group) index indicates that there are "1.87 researchers per 1,000 active population" and Morocco ranks 70th in innovation.

The promotion of clusters in Morocco is characterized by the encouragement of labeled clusters. Moroccan experience with clusters is twofold: first, there are spontaneous clusters where companies organize around a specific sector in cooperation with universities, and second, government-initiated clusters created through project calls in defined sectors.

However, tangible progress in the "polarization/ clustering" policy should not overshadow the challenges faced, particularly concerning the governance of these clusters.

VI. THE STATE'S CONTRIBUTION TO CLUSTER GOVERNANCE AND MARKETING POSITIONING

Morocco has consistently aimed to build a specialized economy based on innovation to enhance the visibility of Moroccan territory internationally. Marketing positioning is a key component. Utilizing marketing tools is free for those who benefit from them, and the specialization of territories is an emerging concept. Marshall introduced the notion of specialization in his definition of the industrial district, which is the spontaneous version of agglomeration (Otando G. & Echoundi M. 2008). A series of economic and industrial policies have identified several sectors where Morocco can position itself competitively, including the automotive industry, aerospace & space, electronics, textiles & leather, agribusiness, and offshoring.

To support this approach, the Moroccan government has implemented various measures to encourage entrepreneurship, innovation, and funding. The relationship between businesses and universities, as well as the valorization of R&D, are weak links in the development chain of clusters and innovative ecosystems. Administrative procedures, which businesses depend on, also pose challenges.

VII. THE MOROCCAN INDUSTRIAL REDEPLOYMENT: TOWARDS AN INNOVATIVE TERRITORIAL APPROACH

Like developed and emerging countries, Morocco has focused on developing business clusters and agglomerations to enhance its economic competitiveness. Since the early 2000s, the country has embarked on ambitious structural reforms aimed at steering its industry toward higher value-added sectors, relying on a logic of innovation and territorial specialization.

Morocco has successfully implemented an ambitious industrial redeployment strategy based on an innovative territorial approach. The diversity of agglomeration forms experimented with reflects a desire to adapt to the economic and social realities of the country. However, further efforts are needed to consolidate these dynamics and create genuine ecosystems of innovation and competitiveness at both local and national levels.

Morocco has experimented with various forms of business agglomerations, inspired by international models such as industrial districts, localized productive systems, and clusters. Notable initiatives include:

- The creation of Integrated Industrial Platforms (P2I) and Technopoles dedicated to strategic sectors like automotive, aerospace, and offshoring.
- The labeling of industrial clusters by the Ministry of Industry, covering sectors such as textiles, agribusiness, and renewable energies.
- The development of free zones and industrial parks managed by public operators like MEDZ to attract foreign investment.

Morocco has managed to implement an ambitious industrial redeployment strategy based on an innovative territorial approach. The variety of agglomeration forms experimented with reflects an effort to adapt to the country's economic and social realities. Nevertheless, further efforts are required to consolidate these dynamics and foster genuine innovation and competitiveness ecosystems at both local and national levels.

The agglomeration policies pursued in Morocco reflect a desire to adapt to the country's economic and social specifics. The State plays a leading role in driving and supporting these initiatives, adopting a top-down approach for their implementation. This allows for better coordination among stakeholders and addresses the needs of businesses. However, the development of these agglomerations also presents challenges, particularly regarding governance, financing, and business support.

VIII. ANALYSIS OF MOROCCO'S AGGLOMERATION POLICY

The initial intention was to launch the "Morocco Competitive 1995" policy, aimed at developing high-value-added production sectors, specifically in Tourism, Textiles, Seafood Products, and Electronics. This policy sought to drive sectoral economic growth without focusing on the concentration of economic activities.

After ten years, the emergence plan, succeeding the "Morocco Competitive" policy, aimed to optimize Moroccan industry by promoting new growth sectors. The Moroccan government introduced the "Emergence Plan," which included additional sectors such as Offshoring, Automotive, Electronics, Seafood Processing, Aerospace, Textiles and Leather, and Agribusiness. This strategy aimed to create jobs, increase the volume of industrial exports, and attract foreign direct investments (FDI). The government made significant efforts to support this strategy through the creation of industrial platforms and sector-specific training. The Emergence Plan marked the beginning of a new industrial policy focused on competitiveness, innovation, and territorial specialization.

The "National Pact for Industrial Emergence (2009-2015)" contract-program brought together the state and businesses to support the industrial sector during the contract period. The goals of this contract included increasing the industrial GDP, reducing the trade deficit, supporting national industrial investment, attracting FDI, and contributing to territorial planning policies. The establishment of industrial platforms was a key strategy among others aimed at enhancing local industrial zones to attract national and international investors. Under the ministry's oversight, the Moroccan Agency for Industrial Development (AMDI) monitored and supported investment projects in these platforms.

Despite efforts in industrial policy, results were not satisfactory. The national GDP fell from 16.62% in 2003 to 14.57% in 2012, with a loss of industrial jobs and a decline in export volumes. This led to the implementation of the "Industrial Acceleration 2014-2020" policy, aiming to improve GDP by incorporating industrial GDP into national GDP to boost national economic growth and job creation over the next decade. This policy focused on supporting industrial investors, encouraging entrepreneurs and small businesses with tailored fiscal incentives, and integrating them into the industrial fabric. The Industrial Acceleration policy was aligned with the idea of territorial competitiveness and development within an industrial growth framework. The goal was to optimize territorial competitiveness and strengthen the industrial fabric by reinforcing alliances between companies through the strategy of concentrating SMEs around larger firms.

IX. THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN TERRITORIAL MARKETING STRATEGY

The Moroccan experience highlights the strategic orientations implemented to define an attractive positioning for territories. Public institutions play a crucial role in territorial marketing by positively influencing the attractiveness for both households and investing businesses. Their presence strengthens economic and demographic density, prompting local authorities to enhance public services to boost attractiveness. Moreover, the proximity of

public institutions significantly impacts the decision of businesses to choose a territory for establishment, underscoring the strategic importance of their presence for local economic development.

A city's status is pivotal in facilitating the formation of an extensive network of involved actors. Furthermore, a territory can intentionally develop a diverse range of public actors to bolster its position and attractiveness.

Cities, due to their status and economic or cultural importance, naturally attract and assemble a wide range of actors. This includes businesses, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and public entities at various administrative levels. These actors often interact and collaborate synergistically to promote the economic, social, and cultural development of the city and its surroundings.

On the other hand, territories aiming to strengthen their position on the national or international stage can deliberately establish a structured network of public actors. This may involve inter-municipal cooperation initiatives, strategic public-private partnerships, or specific programs aimed at improving infrastructure, public services, and investment attraction.

Additionally, a city's status and the configuration of its network of actors are determining factors for its economic dynamism and regional influence. Similarly, implementing a proactive strategy to engage various public actors can significantly enhance a territory's positioning on the national and international map.

X. THE CONTRIBUTION OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION IN ENHANCING MARKETING POSITIONING STRATEGY

The status of a city plays an indirect but significant role in establishing an extensive network of actors. How a city is perceived and structured influences the ability of various actors, whether public or private, to collaborate and innovate. Additionally, a territory can enhance its attractiveness by mobilizing a diverse range of public actors, contributing to the creation of a favorable environment for economic development.

10.1. Regarding the maximization of training and skills:

Skills are a crucial asset sought by businesses. The concentration of talent within a territory boosts its attractiveness and reinforces agglomeration effects. In the absence of these skills, businesses are inclined to seek other locations. The density of qualified residents plays a decisive role in these effects.

10.2. Concerning urban planning:

Urban planning is a clear managerial involvement aimed at improving the appearance and public services of a territory. It reflects strategic orientations and ambitions for territorial transformation, strengthening urban infrastructures and expanding urban areas to accommodate investments. This includes constructing public institutions and improving

logistics to facilitate the distribution of goods and services, addressing the demand from SMEs for expansive urban spaces conducive to their growth.

10.3. On optimizing economic sectors:

Research shows a correlation between location and specialization of economic sectors. Each business seeks a territory that optimizes its sector of activity, thereby facilitating its decision to locate there. Consequently, territories need to encourage local entrepreneurship and simplify business location procedures to maximize the diversity of economic sectors. This requires investment in youth training and in platforms tailored to these sectors, in order to invigorate the local economy and attract investment.

XI. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This research provides significant contributions to the understanding of business agglomeration phenomena and territorial development in Morocco. By examining industrial polarization strategies through the lens of agglomeration economies theory, the study highlights several key contributions:

11.1. Contribution to the theory of agglomeration economies

The research enriches the theoretical understanding of agglomeration economies by highlighting their specific application in the Moroccan context. By utilizing models of agglomeration such as industrial districts, localized production systems, competitiveness poles, and clusters, the study illustrates how geographic concentration and collaboration between businesses and institutions foster innovation and economic performance. These theoretical contributions can be adapted to other regional contexts in development.

11.2. Role of territorial marketing in regional development

The study demonstrates the importance of territorial marketing as a strategic lever for regional development. By showing how marketing positioning can attract businesses and households while strengthening local institutional presence, the research indicates that territorial marketing is crucial for enhancing the economic attractiveness of regions. These insights provide a practical framework for policymakers and regional development officials, enabling them to design more effective territorial marketing strategies.

11.3. Analysis of cluster policies in Morocco

By examining cluster policies in Morocco, such as the Emergence Plan and the National Pact for Industrial Emergence, the research offers a critical analysis of the country's efforts to modernize its industrial sector. The results highlight both successes and challenges encountered in implementing these policies, particularly issues related to governance and financing. This analysis provides valuable recommendations for improving the design and execution of industrial and cluster policies in the future.

11.4. Role of local governance and resource mobilization

The study emphasizes the crucial role of local governance in effectively implementing territorial marketing strategies and regional development. By demonstrating how effective governance and resource mobilization—including skills training, urban planning, and sector optimization—can enhance the positioning of territories, the research provides concrete guidance for local authorities and decision-makers. This contribution is particularly relevant for economically transitioning regions seeking to attract investment and stimulate economic growth.

11.5. Impact of international models on the Moroccan context

By adapting agglomeration and cluster models developed in industrialized European countries to Moroccan realities, the research illustrates how these models can be contextualized to meet local needs. The lessons drawn from international experiences and their application to Morocco offer perspectives on how developing countries can benefit from proven approaches while considering local specificities.

11.6. Contribution to the literature on industrial redeployment

The research also contributes to the literature on industrial redeployment by highlighting Morocco's efforts to shift its economy from reliance on natural resources to a more diversified and innovative model. By examining policies and outcomes to date, this research enriches the debate on best practices and strategies for industrial transformation in emerging economies.

In summary, this research provides valuable insights into how agglomeration strategies, territorial marketing, and local governance interact to promote regional development and innovation. The findings and recommendations from this study will serve as a guide for public policies and territorial development initiatives, not only in Morocco but also in other similar contexts.

CONCLUSION

This research offers valuable insights into the phenomenon of business agglomeration in Morocco, highlighting the interplay between industrial polarization strategies and agglomeration economies theory. The study emphasizes the critical role of territorial marketing, local governance, and resource mobilization in driving regional development and enhancing territorial competitiveness.

The study significantly contributes to the theory of agglomeration economies by demonstrating its application within the Moroccan context. It illustrates how models such as industrial districts, localized production systems, and clusters can facilitate innovation and improve economic performance through geographic concentration and collaborative efforts. This theoretical contribution provides a foundation for adapting these models to various regional settings and development stages.

Territorial marketing is identified as a crucial strategy for regional development. By effectively positioning a territory, local authorities can attract businesses and residents, thereby enhancing the economic appeal of regions. This research underscores the importance of leveraging marketing strategies to strengthen the institutional presence and competitive edge of Moroccan territories. The insights gained offer practical guidelines for policymakers and regional development practitioners aiming to design impactful marketing strategies.

The analysis of Morocco's cluster policies, including the Emergence Plan and the National Pact for Industrial Emergence, provides a nuanced view of the country's efforts to modernize its industrial sector. The study highlights both the achievements and the challenges, particularly concerning governance and financing. These findings offer valuable recommendations for refining industrial and cluster policies to better support economic transformation and regional development.

The research underscores the pivotal role of local governance in implementing effective territorial marketing strategies and regional development initiatives. It demonstrates how effective governance and strategic resource mobilization—such as skills training, urban planning, and sector optimization—can enhance regional competitiveness. These findings offer actionable insights for local authorities seeking to create supportive environments that attract investment and foster economic growth.

By contextualizing international agglomeration and cluster models to the Moroccan setting, the study provides a framework for how developing countries can benefit from proven strategies while addressing local specificities. This adaptation of international models offers a valuable perspective on how other emerging economies might tailor global best practices to their own contexts.

Finally, the research contributes to the broader literature on industrial redeployment by documenting Morocco's shift from reliance on natural resources to a more diversified and innovative industrial model. The examination of policies and outcomes enriches the discussion on effective strategies for industrial transformation in emerging economies.

In conclusion, this study advances the understanding of how business agglomeration, territorial marketing, and local governance intersect to drive regional development and innovation. The findings and recommendations provide a robust framework for guiding future public policies and development initiatives, both within Morocco and in similar regional contexts. Future research could further explore the impact of emerging technologies and global economic trends on these dynamics to continue advancing the field of territorial development.

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