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THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL PRIORITIZATION OF ENTREPRENEURS: AN EMPIRICAL EXPLORATION (SUMMARY)

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≈ SUMMARY ≈

**THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL
GOAL PRIORITIZATION OF ENTREPRENEURS:
AN EMPIRICAL EXPLORATION**

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Principal Topic

Building on recent research on sustainable entrepreneurship, we adopt a goal setting perspective with reference to the three pillars of sustainable development, namely profit, people and planet. Sustainable entrepreneurship research calls for studies that identify and better understand the influence of individual characteristics on the triple bottom line. Therefore, we aim to explore the individual factors influencing entrepreneurs' *prioritizing* of one objective over the two others. Building on research that shows that an individual's characteristics and his/her perceptions of the context both influence his/her entrepreneurial goals, we study the individual drivers of the sustainable orientation (the triple bottom line) of the entrepreneurial activity.

Method

We use a quantitative approach and explore data from two sources. First, we rely on the Adult Population Survey conducted in 2009 by the GEM. This sample is constituted of nascent entrepreneurs and established entrepreneurs from 54 countries. Second, we use data from the World Bank to control for contextual factors such as GDP per capita. From the GEM dataset, we use three dependent variables that account for goal prioritization between economic, social or environmental goals. We use demographic variables (gender, age, education level, size of the household), individual variables (perception of entrepreneurial competences, previous activity) and variables related to the entrepreneurial activity (sector, level of competition) as explanatory variables that could influence the likely importance that an entrepreneur gives to the three components of the the triple bottom line.

Results and Implications

We find that demographic and individual variables differently influence goal prioritization. In addition, we find that the influence differs between nascent and established entrepreneurs. However, for the two groups of entrepreneurs, we find that the GDP/capita has a positive influence both on the social and environmental objectives in comparison to the economic one. We believe that these results will contribute to better understand the impact of individual characteristics on the triple bottom line of their organization.

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