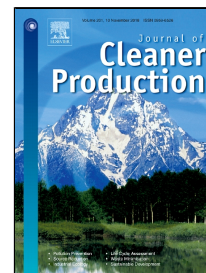


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From “Push Out” to “Pull In” Together: An Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship Definitions in the Academic Field

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From “Push Out” to “Pull In” Together: An Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship

Definitions in the Academic Field

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From “Push Out” to “Pull In” Together: An Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship Definitions in the Academic Field

Abstract

Definitions are important! They are composed of words that express what people think. Despite numerous efforts to bring about a clear and unbiased definition of social entrepreneurship, there is still confusion as how social entrepreneurship should be defined. The objective of this paper is not to state a novel definition, this means not to "push out", but rather to "pull in" together to better understand what the scholars are talking about through their own social entrepreneurship (SE) definitions. In doing so, we contribute to the literature by synthesizing and analysing the SE definitions to better understand the field. To do so, a combination of methods was used: systematic review to reach the articles proposing definitions and memetic analysis to understand the content of the definitions by analysing their memes. From the analysis, three main categories were considered: entity types, entrepreneurial opportunities and intentions/promises. Future research lines and implications are highlighted.

Keywords: social entrepreneurship, definitions, memes, systematic search

1. Introduction

Over the last decade, SE has become an increasingly important phenomenon at the national and international levels (Dey, 2006). For about fifteen years, SE definitions have been proposed in the academic spheres. SE is a fascinating and complex field of research which is gaining more and more attention from different audiences and around the world (Mort, Weerawardena, and Carnegie, 2003; Nicholls, 2008; Weerawardena and Mort, 2006). According to Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-skillern (2006), as SE is an emerging field of research within the academy, its theoretical underpinning has not been adequately explored and a contribution at theoretical and practical level is needed. As the phenomenon is emergent and is calling the attention at different levels, it is interesting and worth investigating SE from several points of view (Macke, Sarate, Domeneghini, & Silva, 2018). Considering that, this study aims to fill the gap in the literature by rigorously analysing SE original definitions.

Our study add value to the knowledge to previous studies that have used SE definitions. There are four studies that have used SE definitions. The first examined the state of SE to identify avenues of research. These SE definitions also have been used to contrast them to other forms of entrepreneurship (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010). The second, focused on the importance of institutional actors such as academics, researchers, consultants as agents that delineate the boundaries of SE (Hervieux, Gedajlovic, & Turcotte, 2010). Nicholls (2010) focused on the microstructures of legitimation considering key actors, discourses and emerging narrative logics. And, the last one, defines SE, discusses its contributions and develops a typology of entrepreneurs (Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009). These four studies have used SE definitions and have contributed to the literature, undoubtedly. Considering these studies, we highlight the novelty of our study as well as its contribution to the SE literature.

Regarding definitions, some scholars emphasize that there is a bulk of SE definitions trying to explain the phenomenon (Austin et al., 2006; Harding, 2004). Other scholars point out that SE is a controversial concept (Dacin et al., 2010; Roper and Cheney, 2005) because there is no understanding nor a unifying paradigm of SE (Bacq and Janssen, 2011). This bulk of definitions is also characterized by a diversity of academic points of view and disagreements in relation to the SE definition (Chell, Nicolopoulou, and Karataş-Özkan, 2010; Dacin et al., 2010; Di Domenico, Haugh, and Tracey, 2010; Roper and Cheney, 2005; Thompson, 2002).

Literature shows a proliferation of definitions from around the world (Chell, Nicolopoulou, and Karataş-Özkan, 2010; Dacin et al., 2010; Di Domenico, Haugh, and Tracey, 2010; Roper and Cheney, 2005; Thompson, 2002). Therefore, definitions are important! They are composed by words that express what people think. The linguistic turn (Khatchadourian and Rorty, 1970) proposed that language is not only the expression of what we think but the condition of thinking. Language is important because it constitutes reality. The authors also pointed out that words function as labels attached to concepts. Therefore, language is used for transmitting meaning and is constituted by ideas of what we do and how we do things. Considering that, definitions of SE may constitute expressions of scholars related to how they view the field and how they would like it to be. Moreover, definitions are composed of memes, which are words that transmit information (Dennett, 2003, 2007). These definitions are developed in a specific context and change over time.

SE definitions have undergone an evolution in the meanings considering the time and the contexts. The aim of this paper is not to propose yet another SE definition, but rather to understand how scholars envision the notion using SE definitions. Therefore, the idea is to pull in together several scholars' SE definitions to analyse them. Definitions are constituted of memes that are charged of information and meaning. So, these memes have been analysed

considering their semantic space¹ considering their similarities. Therefore, the questions we seek to answer in this article are:

What does the bulk of SE definitions reveal, this means, what are the way of scholars' thinking in relation of what SE is? What are the most relevant memes in the SE definitions? How can the relevant memes help us to highlight future research issues and implications?

By unswerving these questions, this study contributes directly to the field of SE in three ways. Firstly, we compile original definitions on SE to analyse what the scholars are talking about. Secondly, by analysing the content of SE definitions we identify the most relevant memes in the SE definitions from scholars. And third, we used two types of methodologies to reach the answers of the questions which is a novelty in terms of usage of techniques and methodologies.

To do so, we have applied two methods in the article. On one hand, systemic search allowed us to systematically search for SE definitions. And, on the other hand, memetic analysis was performed to analyse the meaning of memes within SE definitions. Memetic analysis is appropriate to analyse definitions because they are way of thinking that has been spread in society such as the case of SE definition. Previous studies have used this method in several disciplines (Aunger, 2000, 2002; Blackmore, 2001; Blute, 2010; Leigh, 2010; Shifman, 2013). The systematic search is interesting to broadly know about a phenomenon and to account the state of art. This is a rigorous method that allows replicability (Moher et al., 2015). The systematic search allowed to find 45 original definitions. These definitions were analysed

¹ Semantic spaces are a popular framework for the representation of word meaning. They encode the meaning of words as high-dimensional vectors, with dimensions representing context elements, for example other words, or documents in which the target word has appeared (Erk, 2009)

using QDA Miner. Three main categories that clustered memes emerged from the analysis: entity types, entrepreneurial opportunities and intentions/promises. Thereby, the application of

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: previous studies that have used SE definitions are presented. The methodology used to perform this study is presented on the next section. The results of the study are pointed out. And, finally, the conclusion and discussion considering the findings of the memetic analysis is highlighted.

2. Previous Studies: Social Entrepreneurship Definitions

There have been many attempts to establish a better understanding of SE by defining it. These definitions have been used in previous studies with different purposes (Table 1). For instance, Dacin et al., (2010) have examined the SE literature to identify the uniqueness of SE and highlight avenues for future research. The authors evaluated some SE definitions to contrast it to other forms of entrepreneurship. Definitions used by Dacin et al., (2010) come from academia and institutions, and some definitions of social entrepreneur and social enterprise have been included. Furthermore, Hervieux et al. (2010) have also used SE definitions with the aim to show how some actors are tracing the SE boundaries. Definitions and descriptions from academics, consultants and foundations were included.

Insert Table 1

Another study conceptualized SE as a field of action in a pre-paradigmatic state (Nicholls, 2010). This study focused on the microstructures of legitimation that characterize SE by analysing its key actors, discourses and emerging narratives. To do that, the author has used public SE definitions. And, finally, Zahra et al., (2009) presented a study that defines SE, discusses its contributions to create social wealth and creates a typology of entrepreneurs' search processes that lead to the discovery of opportunities for creating social ventures.

Moreover, definitions and descriptions of SE and social entrepreneurs have been listed as a part of the framework of the study. Like Hervieux et al., (2010), authors have used definitions from different actors involved in the SE phenomenon. Therefore, as mentioned above, the aim of this study is not to state a new definition but to go from push out to pull in together. Unlike authors emphasizing the fragmented and contested nature of SE definitions (Mort et al., 2003; Nicholls, 2010; Nicolopoulou, 2014; Weerawardena and Mort, 2006), we emphasize their synergies by pulling in together several definitions to analyse the meaning of the memes, considering their common semantic space and their similarities.

3. Methodology

We used a combination of two methods to develop this study: a systematic review of SE definitions and a memetic analysis.

3.1. Systematic Review

Following suggestions of methodological rigor for literature reviews (Denyer and Neely, 2004; Thorpe, Holt, Macpherson, and Pittaway, 2005) and considering the aim to consolidate the literature in the domain of SE, our methodology applies a systematic evidence-informed literature review (Tranfield, Denyer, and Smart, 2003). Tranfield et al., (2003) pointed out that systematic reviews should include a comprehensive search of all potentially relevant articles and the use of explicit, reproducible criteria in the selection of articles, among others. Therefore, a systematic review aims to gather all relevant evidences that fit the eligibility criteria to answer a specific question. Systematic reviews present several advantages to minimize bias in the identification, selection, and synthesis of the studies (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006). Furthermore, by conducting a systematic review, we ensure replicability of the methodology, i.e. a systematic search that attempts to identify all studies that would meet the

criteria, assessment of the validity of the definitions and systematic presentation of the results (Moher et al., 2015). For this study, a systematic review was applied focusing on the systematic search of articles that fit our research criteria.

3.2. Memetic Analysis

To go beyond presenting a synthesis of the definitions, we conducted a memetic analysis. Memetic analysis has drawn a lot of attention in diverse fields of academic knowledge (Aunger, 2000, 2002; Blackmore, 2001; Blute, 2010; Brodie, 1996; Distin, 2005; Gers, 2008; Leigh, 2010; Lynch, 1996; Shifman, 2013, 2014).

A meme is typically defined as a unit of information transmitted through non-genetic means (Dennett, 2003, 2007). Memes are cultural replicators of ideas, words, theories among others that usually are accepted by society and spread until reach their validity (Dawkins, 1976). Dawkins pointed out that memes are not universal but are established in specific territories of knowledge and is transfer among specific groups.

Memes are important because they are considered as a second replicator, after the genes (Dawkins, 1976), that drives cultural evolution (Hodgson and Knudsen, 2010; Wilkins and Hull, 2014). To explain the cultural replication, the theoretical bases pointed out by Dawkins (1976) in Blackmore (2010) have been used. This perspective focuses on a specific cultural trait, habit or tradition and tries to explain what helps the meme survive and spread in each context (Schlaile and Ehrenberger, 2016).

In the business management field, memetic analysis has been used to explain the (cultural) evolution of firms (Weeks and Galunic, 2003), the evolution of patented technology (Bedau, 2013) and trademarks (Johnson, 2013). It has been used explicitly in the field of marketing (Marsden, 1998, 2002), in organizational contexts (Shepherd and McKelvey, 2009)

and innovation strategy (Pech, 2003). Moreover, memetic analysis has been used to analyse definitions. For instance, Gross (1996) analysed original messages to see the addition and mutation of textual elements. Best (1997) in contrast, used the frequency of key words in the text to identify their semantic space. According to the author, frequency of key words, also be memes that replicate key words within the text. This study, therefore, applies these two approaches in the analysis of SE definitions. Next, we explain how we planned and conducted the systematic review, how memes were categorized and analysed, and the way we organized and presented the results.

4. Performing the Systematic Review

4.1. Review protocol

This review is based on the PRISMA guidelines on reporting systematic reviews. Although this tool is more applied in the natural sciences, we found several advantages in using PRISMA guidelines to conduct the review of the SE definitions. PRISMA guidelines contain a set of items for reporting systematic reviews. The aim of these items is to help authors improve the reporting of systematic reviews. These guidelines consist of a 27-item checklist and a four-phase flow chart (Moher et al., 2015).

For this study, we adapted the PRISMA guidelines to our subject. The selection of articles was performed in three main steps. First, one author, an expert in literature search, conducted the search in the following databases: WoS, SCOPUS and Google Scholar. The first search was conducted using keywords such as “social entrepreneurship”, “social enterprise”, “social venture” and “social business”. The search identified 325 articles. Second, the authors screened all the articles. All duplicated articles (54) were removed. Third, the authors examined all remaining 271 full-text articles to select the studies that strictly met the research criteria. After this process, 48 articles were finally included in our study, but then three of those

articles were excluded as explained in the research criteria, remaining finally 45 articles of SE original definitions².

4.2. Research criteria

To select the articles for our study, some research criteria were established: *Language*: articles published in English were included due to most search engines containing journals in English and due to the linguistic limitation. Spanish was also included because of the researchers' competences, yielding one article in Spanish. *Quality*: articles published in academic journals were considered. We tried to be consistent with the whole sample to reduce biases. For this reason, after scrutiny of the articles, two working papers that defined social entrepreneurship were excluded (Dees, 1998; Light, 2005). In the same way, only one article from the same author was considered when the definition of social entrepreneurship was similar across two or more articles. Considering that, one more article was excluded (Zahra, Rawhouser, Bhawe, Neubaum, and Hayton, 2008). Furthermore, books, book chapters, reports and conference papers were also excluded. This measure was taken to reduce the variability in the peer review process and ensure a homogeneous status of validated knowledge (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Bachrach, and Podsakoff, 2005). *Social entrepreneurship definition*: empirical and theoretical articles were considered as long as they provided a novel definition of social entrepreneurship. This means that articles that used a definition from other authors were not included in the scope of this study to avoid using the same definitions. However, several articles from the same author were considered only when their definitions of social entrepreneurship varied across their articles, for example: Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Bacq, Hartog, and Hoogendoorn, 2014; Bacq, Hartog, and Hoogendoorn, 2013; Nicholls, 2009, 2010.

² The search of articles was performed between Sept and Dec 2017.

Period: articles were searched between Sept and Dec 2017. This means that all articles with a novel definition of SE that was published until this date were included.

4.3. Search Strategy and Challenges

The subject of social entrepreneurship has been widely studied and criticized as ill-defined (Dacin, Dacin, and Tracey, 2011; Lan, Zhu, Ness, Xing, and Schneider, 2014; Mair and Martí, 2006). There is no definitive consensus about what the term means (Light, 2006, 2008; Perrini, 2006b). This represents a challenge to conduct this study because of the blurred boundaries that characterize this field of research.

As mentioned before, Web of Science, SCOPUS and the Google Scholar were used as research engines to find the articles. Then, we proceeded as follows. First, consistent with prior approaches to identify relevant articles (Nielsen, 2010; Thorpe et al., 2005), some keywords on the subject were identified and were constructed into search strings. Accordingly, the terms “social entrepreneurship”, “social enterprise”, “social venture”, “social business” were separately searched. The search for each of the keywords was conducted along with the terms “define”, “defining” and “definition”. Then, these keywords were searched for in titles and abstracts of each paper.

Second, to identify articles that defined social entrepreneurship, the references of the selected articles were reviewed in a recursive³ way. This means each reference of an article was scrutinized in detail to reach more articles about SE that use a definition. This method allows us to reuse previous references of articles to find more references, and this process is

³ Recursion is a method used in computer science and mathematics where the solution to a problem depends on solutions to smaller instances of the same problem (Graham, Knuth, & Patashnik, 1990). Moreover, it is used to define the elements in a set in terms of other elements in the set (Aczel, 1977).

performed until no more new references on SE are found. Definitions can appear at the beginning in the introduction, in the literature review or in the results. This means that to find the definition of social entrepreneurship on a paper so far depended on the design of the methodology of the whole paper.

Third, in the process of searching and scrutinizing the articles, five studies were found that mapped and analysed several definitions on social entrepreneurship (Dacin et al., 2010; Hervieux et al., 2010; Nicholls, 2010; Zahra et al., 2009). This facilitated the identification of articles that define social entrepreneurship. However, after a careful revision of these articles, only those that fit our research criteria were included.

Finally, the temporal scope of the reviewed articles was not limited. Despite all the efforts, it should be noted that the literature search conducted in this study was extensive, but not exhaustive. This means that it could be possible that some articles were not considered. Nonetheless, the papers included in this study provided a reasonable representation of the SE definitions. The whole process of selecting articles is presented in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1

4.4. Distribution of the articles by publication outlet

Results of the search of articles that define SE shows that the publication dates range from 2000 (Fowler, 2000) and 2015 (Jokela and Elo, 2015). Table 2 shows the 45 articles published in 31 academic journals. Academic journals where more than one paper was published are Business Horizon (2), Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice (4), Journal of Business World (4) and the Journal of Business Ethics (3). This distribution gives us an idea of the multidisciplinary and rich character of the topic.

Insert Table 2

Furthermore, Figure 2 shows that there is a primacy of the Anglo-Saxon countries – The United States, The United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – in the publication of articles that have defined SE (72%) in contrast to their counterparts from Europe, Latin America and Asia (28%).

Insert Figure 2

4.5. Performing Memetic Analysis and Categorizing

Once the 45 definitions of SE ([Annex 1](#)) based on the systematic review were available, the identification of memes was performed. To do that, the frequency of key words occurring within each definition was used to constitute memes (Best, 1997). They were codified and then clustered, forming categories considering their linguistic semantic, to understand the meaning of memes within scholarly SE. All this process was executed using QDA Mining. From the 45 definitions, we identified 218 memes that were clustered in 21 categories according to their linguistic semantic from which we only considered the three categories. The selection of categories was based on the highest absolute frequency (presented in percentage): intentions/promises (18,62%), entity (12,89%), and entrepreneurial opportunities (10,50%). Frequency indicates the times that a meme was repeated in the definitions showing the importance of the meme in the discourse of scholars.

5. Results

As mentioned before, from the analysis, three main categories at meso level were considered for this study considering their frequency: intentions/promises (18,62%), entrepreneurial opportunities (10,50%) and types of entities (12,89%). The frequency of the

three most salient categories is consistent with the importance of these three categories in the SE literature. Therefore, the following sections explore how memes grouped in these categories have been used by scholars over time.

5.1. Category 1: Intentions / promises

First, within the definitions, memes related to intentions were found. Some statements composed by memes have been repeated over time by scholars. These intentions could be considered as the “raison d’être” of SE because these intentions are to a certain extent promises that define the essence of SE and the accomplishment of SE intentions. Intentions stipulated in the definitions therefore mark the boundaries of what SE is and what elements are included in it. Figure 3 shows the memes grouped in sub-categories considering their similarities and semantic space. “Intention” is a category that grouped all the intentions or promises included in the scholars’ SE definitions.

Insert Figure 3

The analysis of SE definitions shows several types of intentions that scholars have considered within **definitions**. This fact allows us to better understand the SE field from the point of view of scholars. Table 3 shows us the memes grouped in sub-categories considering their similarities and semantic space.

Insert Table 3

The sub-category ‘people’ grouped memes that contain intentions or promises oriented to people. This means that there is a relationship of cause-effect regarding the SE’s intention that causes an effect over the people and/or society. For instance, Lan et al., (2014) used ‘*common prosperity*’ regarding the exploitation of opportunities by social entrepreneurs. The sense is

that opportunities are exploited by social entrepreneurs for triggering a common prosperity for people or society. In the same vein, the meme '*better future for a group*' focused on the creation of an ecosystem around the new equilibrium which will alleviate the suffering of a specific group of people (Martin and Osberg, 2007). The meme '*helping society*' was used by Thompson (2002) to emphasize that businesses have the commitment to doing good to the society and to the environment (Thompson, 2002). The memes '*solutions*' and '*community capacity*' are related to solving a problem in the community. In this case Farmer and Kilpatrick (2009) focused on a specific group of patients in a specific community. The authors also relate the identification of opportunities envisioning the solution of problems and empowering the community members.

Within the category 'intentions', a sub-category called 'social aspects' grouped memes related to SE's promises using the word social. For instance, Fowler (2000) pointed out that SE is creating institutions and organizations that sustain '*social benefits*'. These organizations perform actions to enhance or reconfigure the existing institutional arrangements (Nicholls, 2009). Other memes considered within this sub-category referred to '*social change*' which was linked with opportunities. This means that social entrepreneurs may pursue opportunities to catalyse social change (Mair and Martí, 2006; Roberts and Woods, 2005; Tapsell and Woods, 2010). Other scholars pointed out that SE is linked to innovation that leads to positive social change (Swanson and Di Zhang, 2010; Tracey and Jarvis, 2007).

'*Social goals*' was another meme found in the definitions of SE pointed out by scholars. This meme highlights the objective that an organization may have. In this case, social entrepreneurs should be able to apply strategies that can serve a social goal (Agafonow, 2014). Also, it was highlighted that social entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurial activities with a

social goal (Bacq et al., 2014, 2013) and create businesses with social objectives whose surpluses are re-invested in the business or in the community (Harding, 2004).

Another interesting meme found in the analysis was '*social value*'. Several scholars have used this meme in their definition of SE. For instance, businesses, non-profit or government sectors may perform activities in an innovative way to create social value (Austin et al., 2006). Moreover, the identification, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities may aim the social value creation using market-based activities (Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Certo and Miller, 2008; Lan et al., 2014; Martin and Osberg, 2007; Peredo and McLean, 2006; Weerawardena and Mort, 2006).

In a similar sense, it was pointed out that social entrepreneurs may use their human capital to achieve their mission of wealth and social value creation (Chell et al., 2010; Sharir and Lerner, 2006). This social value creation may provide solutions to social problems (Dacin et al., 2011).

Still in the “intentions” category, the sub-category “financial aims” grouped memes related to the financial intentions of businesses/organizations in SE. Bacq et al., (2013) pointed out that SE pursues social goals but may also pursue financial objectives. Following the blended value perspective, social value can be created through commercial and market-based activities (Bacq and Janssen, 2011). Furthermore, the sub-category “contextual issues” grouped intentions related to a specific context. For instance, Guzmán-Vásquez and Trujillo-Dávila (2008) pointed out that the objective of SE is to create social value to reach a new stable equilibrium for society. In the same vein, Martin and Osberg (2007) highlighted that SE seeks a new and stable equilibrium that alleviates the suffering of a target group or society. Moreover, the identification of opportunities will be oriented towards the improvement of the current systems by inventing new approaches (Seelos and Mair, 2005). In addition, SE focuses

not only on the individual level but also on the collective level, i.e. organizations and communities band together to create pattern-breaking change (Light, 2006).

The usage of the memes within the “intentions” category highlighted by scholars has changed over time. Table 3 shows that scholars focused most on intentions/promises oriented to people and to social aspects. However, memes that highlight promises oriented to people are concentrated in the periods from 2003 to 2005 and from 2006 to 2010. In contrast, memes referring to intentions related to social aspects are most concentrated in the period from 2006 to 2010. Furthermore, it appeared that few scholars used memes to refer to the contextual aspects (Guzmán-Vásquez and Trujillo-Dávila, 2008; Light, 2006; Martin and Osberg, 2007) and financial aims (Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Bacq et al., 2013) over the periods.

5.2. Category 2: Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Entrepreneurial opportunity perception is the first step an entrepreneur performs in the context of entrepreneurship. However, scholars have pointed out that opportunities for social entrepreneurs are different from the ones facing their counterpart commercial entrepreneurs (Austin et al., 2006; Dorado, 2006; Mair, 2006; Murphy and Coombes, 2009). For other scholars, the field of entrepreneurial opportunities in the field of SE is still in its early stages (Lehner and Kansikas, 2012) and for other scholars the topic of entrepreneurial opportunity perception remains underexplored in the field of SE (Shaw and Carter, 2010). Our analysis of SE definitions shows all the memes that scholars have used to refer to entrepreneurial opportunities (Figure 4). We performed the analysis of the category “entrepreneurial opportunities” regarding their semantic space and the usage of diverse terminologies to refer to entrepreneurial opportunities within SE definitions pointed out by scholars over time.

Insert Figure 4

Results show that scholars have used different actions to undertake the opportunities. For instance, we can see that “process of identifying”, “evaluating”, “discovering”, “recognize”, “exploring”, “persecution” and pursuing” involve the action of individuals to undertake opportunities. In contrast, “exploiting” an opportunity refers to taking the advantage, this means the entrepreneur previously has performed some of the actions mentioned before.

Moreover, it appears that the meme “*opportunity*” has been used together with one or more actions mentioned before. For instance, for some scholars, SE encompasses the “*discovery*” (Bacq et al., 2013; Zahra et al., 2009), “*exploitation*” (Certo and Miller, 2008; Weerawardena and Mort, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009), “*evaluation*” (Bacq et al., 2013; Certo and Miller, 2008; Guzmán-Vásquez and Trujillo-Dávila, 2008; Roberts and Woods, 2005), “*pursuing*” (Bacq et al., 2013; Mair and Martí, 2006; Roberts and Woods, 2005; Tapsell and Woods, 2010), “*recognition*” (Certo and Miller, 2008; Mort et al., 2003), “*perception*” (Weerawardena and Mort, 2006), “*persecution*” (Guzmán-Vásquez and Trujillo-Dávila, 2008), “*construction*” (Guzmán-Vásquez and Trujillo-Dávila, 2008; Roberts and Woods, 2005; Tapsell and Woods, 2010) and “*identification*” (Martin and Osberg, 2007) of opportunities. Furthermore, data shows that these memes related to entrepreneurial opportunities have been linked to the mission or “*la raison d’être de l’entrepreneuriat social*”. All these memes are in SE definitions and are linked to opportunities that arise from a kind of social problem and/or environmental challenge.

In addition, the analysis of memes shows that most memes refer to at least two themes: one is the subject and the other is the process performed by an individual(s). Table 4 shows that the meme “opportunity” has been used over time having more presence in the period 2006 – 2010.

Insert Table 4

5.3. Category 3: Types of Entities⁴ in SE

Within the literature, there has been much debate over what type of entities are included in SE. According to Martin and Osberg (2007) there are too many non-entrepreneurial efforts included in the SE definitions. These authors consider a risk because could be a loose of legitimacy and a loose of the essence of what SE is. In the same vein, Roberts and Woods (2005) highlighted that charity and benevolence organizations are not considered in SE because social entrepreneurs are business people that identify opportunities that others do not. Furthermore, we found the social enterprise which has been deemed an entity in SE (Buckingham and Teasdale, 2013). In this sense, social enterprise has been defined by Noya and Clarence (2007) as “any activity conducted in the public interest, organized with an entrepreneurial strategy...” (p. 248). We can see that this definition is a bit confused because this means, literally, that a social enterprise is an activity and not an organization that performs such activity. Either way, it seems clear that there are several points of view and disagreements regarding what types of entities are included in the SE field.

Considering that, our inductive analysis of SE definitions shows all the types of entities – other authors call them business models (Boons & Lüdeke-Freund, 2013; Chesbrough, 2007) – that scholars have considered within this field, even when they disagree. This allows us to better understand the SE field from the point of view of scholars. Figure 5 shows the memes grouped in sub-categories considering their similarities and semantic space. “Entity” is a general category that grouped all types of entities found in the scholarly SE definitions.

⁴ The term “entity” is used in this study in the sense that is defined in sources such as the Oxford Dictionary: “a thing with distinct and independent existence”. Wikipedia: “an entity is something that exist as itself, as a subject or as an object, actually or potentially, concretely or abstractly”.

Insert Figure 5

The analysis shows that the usage of memes regarding the type of entities varied widely over time (Table 5). The sub-category “micro-activities” grouped “non-organizational” entities such as practices, activities and initiatives. For instance, Bacq et al., (2013) refers to social entrepreneurial “activity”. In the same vein, Zahra et al., (2009) pointed out that SE encompasses activities to discover and exploit opportunities. Also, “initiatives” are memes that appear in the SE literature. These “initiatives” are undertaken by private individuals or organizations (Korosec and Berman, 2006). Farmer and Kilpatrick (2009) and Santos (2012) refer to initiatives to tackle social problems. In the same way, it is shown that “practices” appeared as a type of entity that could be created to sustain social benefits (Fowler, 2000). These micro-activities give us an idea that SE not only involves the creation of a business or an organization with a formal character. Moreover, analysing the memes, we can see that these micro-activities can be performed within an organization as such. Regarding the usage of these memes, our results show that they have been used by scholars over time. Table 5 shows that in the periods of 2000 – 2005 and 2006 – 2010 these memes were less used than in the period 2011 – 2015.

Insert Table 5

In terms of organizational entities, several memes have been sub-categorized as “business” (Figure 3). Memes grouped in this sub-category refer to different ways of using “business” as a type of entity to conduct SE. Cochran (2007) and Harding (2004) have considered orthodox businesses with social objectives whose surpluses mainly are reinvested in the business or in the community. Harding pointed out that these businesses should be capable to generate revenues. Moreover, some memes stressed the importance to apply business practices to solve social problems or to support methods of change (Cochran, 2007;

Montgomery, Dacin, and Dacin, 2012; Swanson and Di Zhang, 2010). However, there are memes that refer to businesses that look for benefits calling them as “for-profit” organizations.

Swanson and Di Zhang (2010) divided the social entrepreneurship zone in two regions according to the implementation of social change and the level of business practices. Based on these criteria, they distinguished on one hand “social transformation entrepreneurial ventures” and on the other hand “social improvement entrepreneurial ventures”. Continuing, analysing memes, we found that SE can occur in entities such as “small units” in large organizations as well as in a single chapter in “federations” (Light, 2006). Other entities found in the sub-category “business” were memes related to “venture” and “social venture”, scholars have used these terms to refer to the type of entity that is created in SE (Jokela and Elo, 2015; Meyskens, Robb-Post, Stamp, Carsrud, and Reynolds, 2010; Peredo and McLean, 2006). These scholars highlighted that these entities are created to fulfil a social mission. Table 4 shows the usage of these memes by scholars in the field of SE over time. It appears that between 2006 – 2010 the meme “business” has been used more intensely than in the other periods.

Another interesting type of entity that appears in the discourse of scholars in the field of SE is “hybrids”. This sub-category grouped memes related to the hybrid organizations as entities within the field of SE. The term “hybrid organization” is found once in the discourse to refer to a social enterprise (Haugh, 2005). However, social enterprise is becoming an interesting stream of research with dozens of articles published in the last years. The lens of hybridity to examine SE and social enterprises has been increasing recently, although most of the papers examines social enterprises as hybrids do not provide a definition of SE. For some scholars, social enterprise is the entity created to maximize value creation rather than value capture (Santos, 2012). Moreover, Vega and Kidwell (2013) differentiate social entrepreneurs from traditional non-profits, NGOs and philanthropists. In this sense, Vega and Kidwell (2013)

highlight that entities within SE combine the performance of risk takers, social activism and business savvy.

Still other scholars focus on non-profits with entrepreneurial behaviour as a type of entity within SE (Lasprogata and Cotten, 2006; Light, 2006; Weerawardena and Mort, 2006). Most of these memes are related to “non-profit” entities in more general way, this means that scholars have not specified what type of non-profit entities are included in SE (Guzmán-Vásquez and Trujillo-Dávila, 2008; Light, 2006; Swanson and Di Zhang, 2010).

The memes in general highlighted that social enterprises are devoted to solving social problems (Cochran, 2007; Thompson, 2002) but should be capable to generate revenues (Harding, 2004; Haugh, 2005; Pärenson, 2011) for being reinvested in the organization. Regarding the usage of these memes over time, Table 4 shows us that in the periods 2000 – 2005 and 2006 – 2010 these memes have been used with more frequency while in the period 2011 – 2015 the usage of this meme in definitions has decreased.

There are other types of entities that have been classified as sub-category such as “community associations”, “federations” and some “macro institutions”. For instance, the meme “community associations” appeared only once in the discourse of scholars (Farmer and Kilpatrick, 2009). Table 4 shows this meme has been used in the period 2006 – 2010. In the same vain, “federations” appeared as a type of entity where SE could be developed, not in the whole entity but sometimes in a single chapter (Light, 2006). Like “community associations”, “federations” appeared in the discourse of scholars once in the period 2006 – 2010.

Besides all the entities mentioned before, there are some “macro institutions” that have been identified in the discourse of scholars in SE. This sub-category grouped memes such as formal and informal institutions and organizations (Bacq et al., 2014, 2013; Fowler, 2000;

Korosec and Berman, 2006; Light, 2006; Nicholls, 2009; Pärenson, 2011; Swanson and Di Zhang, 2010). These macro organizations semantically are grouping micro institutions that have been analysed before. Thus, it is apparent that the semantic space covered by a meme can serve specific purposes within the discourse above all regarding the large diversity of entities that operate within SE. Memes within the sub-category of “macro institutions” have been used over the three periods of time in a similar way, maybe they have been mentioned more times in the period 2006 – 2010. Taking a global look at Table 4, we can see there are three sub-categories of types of entities that have used more over time such as business, hybrids and macro institutions. The remaining sub-categories have been less used in the SE definitions.

6. Discussion

At the beginning of the study, we pointed out that definitions are important because they are constituted of words charged of information and meanings. At the same time, definitions are expressions of people’s (and scholars’) ways of thinking. Considering that, the objective of this paper was not to highlight a new definition, i.e. not to “push out”, but rather to “pull in” together. More precisely, our intention was not to disagree or partially agree with previous definitions by creating a new definition but rather to compile all scholars’ definitions to analyse their contents and wording. In this section, we discuss the results regarding the three categories that have emerged from our study.

Regarding the *Category 1*, related to “intentions/promises”, our analysis of SE’s definitions showed memes that refer to a kind of promise. These promises are part of the mission of entities within SE. As it can be seen in Fig. 3, SE has promises and/or intentions of creating and/or improving social conditions for specific group of people in disadvantage conditions; SE has also the intention to has financial aims; SE has the intention to improve or create better macro contextual issues as well as improving several social aspects in general. All

these promises are difficult to understand when analysing meme by meme considering their semantic meaning. For instance, SE definitions highlighted the memes: social benefit, social change, social conditions, social impact, social mission, social value and social purpose, as part of their definition as a uniqueness and differentiator factor when compared to their counterpart in entrepreneurship (Dees, 1998; Nicholls, 2006; Peredo and McLean, 2006). Moreover, scholars that see SE different from its counterpart entrepreneurship pointed out the mission; motives and challenges are enough factors that makes SE a distinctive field of knowledge (Austin et al., 2006; Hockerts, 2006; Weerawardena and Mort, 2006). However, some scholars have argued that the social value is generated by “all” successful enterprises either by trying to solve a social problem or by generating tax revenue and creating employment (Mair, 2006).

Turning back to the memes related to the “social aspects” found in SE definitions, we think there is a great opportunity for future research to clarify what all these “social-isms” aims mean. They are simply synonymous, there is a philosophical background in these memes or in fact they have different meaning in the context of SE. Moreover, these “social aspects” formulated as SE’s promises and/or intentions should be analysed considering at least the outcomes “a priori” and “a posteriori” the performance of any event/mission of the entity. What we mean is that these “social aspects” such as for example “social impact” or “social change” or any of the others could have a positive, negative or even neutral outcome. Furthermore, it will be good to considered that there are other events and/or phenomena different than social enterprises in the business world that have triggered these social aspects too. Therefore, there is a necessity to clarify what these memes exactly mean in the field of SE.

Regarding, the *Category 2* related to the entrepreneurial opportunities, our results show that this category has followed the trend of entrepreneurship (Bacq and Janssen, 2011; Mair and Martí, 2006). As in entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial opportunities are discovered,

exploited, evaluated, pursued, recognized, perceived, persecuted, constructed and identified. The main difference we found is that social entrepreneurs focus on entrepreneurial opportunities to solve a social problem or deal with an environmental challenge. Also, we can see that some definitions pointed out on the fact that the social entrepreneur may discover opportunities for generate social value in the entity (Martin and Osberg, 2007). However, other definitions highlighted that social entrepreneurs may discover opportunities to make profits (Elkington and Hartigan, 2008; Perrini, 2006). These scholar' definitions shed light regarding the opportunities within the SE field, entrepreneurs will discover opportunities that are intrinsically related to solving social problems (Cohen and Winn, 2007; Zahra et al., 2008) but at the same time they have to generate profits (Martin and Osberg, 2007).

The analysis of the definitions highlighted actions performed by an individual or by a group of individuals to identify an entrepreneurial opportunity. Therefore, the role of the individual or of a group of individuals are important in SE. Social entrepreneurs display an entrepreneurial behaviour such as innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk-taking propensity at the moment to take a decision (Mort et al., 2003). Mort et al., (2003) included in her multidimensional SE construct the picture of the social entrepreneur such as somebody socially entrepreneurially virtuous, who has the mission to create social value for the social organization. In the same vein, Zahra et al., (2009) created a typology of entrepreneurs' search processes that lead to the discovery of entrepreneurial opportunities. However, these previous studies are contrary to the position of some scholars that have highlighted, that to focus on the social entrepreneur brings problems on the definition of SE, and it can lead to more discussion and debate regarding the characteristics of the social entrepreneur (Dacin et al., 2010; Gartner, 1988; Light, 2006; Mair and Martí, 2006).

Moreover, results of our study showed that there are several conceptualizations of entrepreneurial opportunities. As mentioned before, social entrepreneurs discover, exploit, evaluate, pursue, recognize, perceive, persecute, construct and identify opportunities. So, according to Zahra et al., (2008) three conceptualizations of opportunity have dominated the research in entrepreneurship: *the allocative view*, which pointed out that opportunities arise from inefficient allocations in the market. *The discovery view*, which emphasized the value of prior information in discovering information asymmetries. And, *the creative view*, which posits that entrepreneurs seek to optimize the gains of a large group of stakeholders. However, Roberts and Woods (2005) suggest that opportunities for social change are not discovered but they are a construction process. Therefore, we suggest further research considering this diversity in the conceptualization of entrepreneurial opportunities for SE. For instance, may we consider Zahra et al. (2008)'s views of opportunity for the SE field or are there other philosophies behind these concepts? And, how do they apply to SE field of research? Are the actions (discovery, identification, recognition, creation of opportunities) performed by entrepreneurs a simple coincidence, are they synonymous and then can be use indistinctly?

From the analysis of the type of entities, *Category 3*, we can highlight that SE is a phenomenon characterized by its eclectic nature. Our results showed a rich field of knowledge in which we can apply the syllogism highlighted by Gartner (2001) about the blind men and the elephant. Thereby, SE is like the elephant where each type of entity has been developed in different areas of the elephant. In this sense, it is logical that each type of entity had its own characteristics and legal configuration. Instead of regretting the lack of unifying paradigm of SE, one can take an advantage of such diversity and multidisciplinary field of knowledge (Dees and Anderson, 2006).

In fact, we found that there are many types of entities in SE, from informal initiatives to formal organizations (Seelos, and Mair, 2007; Seelos and Mair, 2005). However, usually, some scholars have paid attention to the dichotomy comparison social vs commercial entrepreneurship (Austin et al., 2006; Bacq et al., 2013). This means that there are certain types of entities within both categories. However, usually the literature shows that there are pure for-profit organizations and/or with double bottom mission (Certo and Miller, 2008; Dacin et al., 2011; Thompson, 2002) within SE. Instead of focusing on either one type or on the other, it is worth considering the intersection between both types. Our results have also shown that there are entities such as initiatives, activities, practices or community associations that are mainly developed in communities and neighbourhoods. So, these types of entities probably have a start-end point by developing punctual actions in favour of the community therefore creating new business models (Seelos and Mair, 2005).

Moreover, we can point out that the eclectic nature of SE is consistent with the point of view of Gartner (2001) in the sense that “there is, simply, no theoretical way to connect all this disparate research interest together”. Thereby as SE is constituted by a diversity of types of entities – business, hybrids, micro activities and community associations – it is logical the need to use different theories for each one of these entities. This variety of entities makes the SE field eclectic and brings disagreement among scholars at the moment to defined what SE is. Considering our results, we can remark that all these entities are within SE, probably definitions have been highlighted by scholars considering specific socio-economic environment in which institutions play a role. This is an important characteristic of SE that brings challenges in the methodological aspect, because considering their nature, it will probably difficult the inclusion of all these entities in a box, so for this reason is challenging the data collection of entities in SE.

Finally, instead of assessing what definition is the most relevant for SE, we can point that all definitions have communalities in transversal issues such as the entrepreneurial opportunities that all social entrepreneurs may identify, such as the intention/promise to solve a social problem or environmental challenge. But, also there are differences regarding the type of entity social entrepreneurs will create to reach these objectives and the way in which social entrepreneurs manage the benefits.

7. Future research opportunities

This study triggers interesting questions for future research in relation to the content and meaning of the definitions. For instant, we know where each definition has been stated by knowing the country. It could be interesting analyse the categories we found considering each geographical context. We think that certain contextual characteristics may influence in the development of SE definitions. For example, depending on the geographical context the entrepreneurial opportunities, the entities and the promises/intentions will acquire different characteristics. Apart of this, there is an opportunity to analyse the sense and the meaning of the social-isms found in Category 1. What do exactly they mean in the context of SE? Is it a positive, neutral or negative social benefit, social change, social conditions, social impact, social mission, social value and social purpose? Moreover, it could be interesting in to analyse who are the authors that have developed such SE definitions, from which country they are, so, these factors will enlarge the scope of this study.

8. Implications

Our study analyses SE original definitions by focusing on three main categories that shed light for policy makers, researchers and social entrepreneurs. SE definitions stablish the ways of authors conceiving the phenomenon of SE. By analysing the memes of SE definitions, we

found a diversity of entities that play a role in SE and in the world. Policy makers would leverage this diversity of entities to foster the development of SE in society, at high school, at university among others. Why not to create a subject of SE at high school or at higher education institutions? Probably by creating the SE subject young people will be conscious about social problems and environmental challenges. The analysis of SE definitions also can help future social entrepreneurs to understand what the scope of these types of entities is. Social entrepreneurs can think in other ways to do business by identifying entrepreneurial opportunities that have the objective to alleviate the social and environmental problems. And, researchers may consider important the fact of create a definition because definitions create followers and sometimes change minds. So, it is crucial to consider elements that help junior researchers and policy makers to understand the phenomenon by its definitions.

9. Limitations

This study is not exempt of limitations. The aim of this study is to conduct a systematic review of original definitions of SE performing a memetic analysis. The articles were **searched and downloaded between Sept and Dec 2017** this means that if an article published a new original definition after this period it was not considered. Moreover, we explained that the literature search was extensive but nor exhaustive. This is a limitation of the study because it is possible that some article has not been omitted deliberately. It could be considered a limitation but also an opportunity for future research analyse other categories embedded in the definitions of social entrepreneurship.

10. Conclusion

Systematic review and memetic analysis were conducted in this study. The systematic review allowed us to find 45 original SE definitions from scholars. Three main categories were

considered from the memetic analysis which are the focus of our study: intentions/promises, entrepreneurial opportunities and types of entities within SE. *Category 1: “intentions/promises”* grouped all memes related to promises and intentions highlighted in the SE’s definitions in four sub-categories: people, social aspects, financial aims and contextual issues. The most controversial sub-category is related to the social aspects due to their ambiguity in the meaning. *Category 2: “entrepreneurial opportunities”* is constituted by theoretical elements used in entrepreneurship studies. Entrepreneurial opportunities in SE are oriented to solve social and environmental challenges. And, *Category 3: “entities”* is an interesting and rich due to its eclectic nature. The diversity of entities triggers the focus on legal status of entities which allows them to perform their activities.

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Table 1**Previous studies with SE definitions**

N °	Journal	Authors	Objective
1	Academy of Management Perspectives	Dacin, P., Dacin, M., and Matear, M. (2010)	<p>The article examines the state of social entrepreneurship to identify avenues of research in the field.</p> <p>The authors use SE definitions and contrast them with other forms of entrepreneurship.</p> <p>They concluded that researchers in SE use insights from theories inherent to entrepreneurship.</p>
2	Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy	Hervieux, Gedajlovic, and Turcotte (2010)	<p>The study aims to answer how important institutional actors, such as academic researchers, consulting firms, and foundations delineate the boundaries of SE. results show that there are legitimacy issues in the literature of non-profits but also there are intervention of consultants and foundations.</p>
3	Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice	Nicholls, (2010)	<p>The study focuses on the microstructures of legitimation considering key actors, discourses and emerging narrative logics. The study concludes by delineating a critical role for scholarly research on social entrepreneurship.</p>
4	Journal of Business Venturing	Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, and Shulman (2009)	<p>The study defines SE, discuss its contributions to create social wealth, develops a typology of entrepreneurs' search process that lead to the discovery of opportunities for creating social ventures. The study concludes highlighting implications for entrepreneurs and future lines of research.</p>

Table 2
List of Articles Used for the Study

N °	Journal	Authors	Number articles	Country
1	Third World Quarterly	Fowler A. (2000)	1	Ethiopia
2	International Journal of Public Sector Management	Thompson J. (2002)	1	UK
3	American Business Law Journal	Lasprogata G., Cotton M. (2003)	1	USA
4	International Journal of non-profit a voluntary sector	Mort G., Weerawardena J., Carnegie K. (2003)	1	Australia
5	Leader to Leader	Agafonow A. (2014), Barendsen L., Gardner H. (2004)	1 1	France USA
6	The Journal of Behavioural Science	Alvord S., Brawn D., Letts C. (2004)	1	USA
7	Business Strategy Review	Harding R. (2004)	1	UK
8	Social Enterprise Journal	Haugh H. (2005)	1	UK
9	Journal of Consumer Behaviour	Hibert S., Hogg G., Quinn T. (2005)	1	UK
10	University of Auckland Business Review	Robert D., Woods C. (2005)	1	New Zealand
11	Business Horizon	Seelos C., Mair J. (2005) Cochran P. (2007) Certo T., Miller T. (2008)	1 1 1	Spain USA USA
12	International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal	Tan W., Williams J., Tan T. (2005) Austin J., Stevenson H., Wei-Skillern J. (2006)	1	Singapore USA
13	Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice	Tracey P., Jarvis O. (2007) Meyskens M. et al. (2010) Nicholls A. (2010)	4	UK USA UK
14	Public Administration Review	Korosec R., Berman E. (2006)	1	USA
15	Stanford Social Innovation Review	Light P. (2006) Martin R., Osberg S. (2007) Mair J., Marti I. (2006)	2	USA Canada Spain
16	Journal of Business World	Paredo A., McLean M. (2006) Sharir M., Lerner M. (2006) Weerawardena J., Mort G. (2006)	4	Canada Israel Australia

17	International Small Business Journal	Chell E. (2007)	1	UK
18	Society	Dees G. (2007)	1	USA
19	New England Journal of Entrepreneurship	Vega G., Kidwell R. (2007)	1	USA
20	Estudios Gerenciales	Guzman A., Trujillo M. (2008)	1	Colombia
21	Social Science and Medicine	Farmer J., Kilpatrick S. (2009)	1	UK
22	Accounting, Organizations and Society	Nicholls A. (2009)	1	UK
23	Journal of Business Venturing	Zahra S. et al. (2009)	1	USA
24	International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing	Swanson L., Zhang D. (2010)	1	Canada
25	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Tapsell P., Woods C. (2010)	1	New Zealand
		Bacq S., Janssen F. (2011)	1	Belgium
26	Organization Science	Dacin T., Dacin P., Tracey P. (2011)	1	Canada
27	Society and Business Review	Parenson T. (2011)	1	Estonia
28	Journal of Business Ethics	Murphy P., Coombes S. (2009)		USA
		Montgomery W., Dacin P., Dacin T. (2012)	4	Canada
		Santos F. (2012)		France
		Bacq S., Hartog C., Hoogendoorn B. (2014)		USA
29	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Bacq S., Hartog, C., Hoogendoorn B. (2013)	1	USA
30	Asia Pacific Business Review	Lan H. et al. (2014)	1	China
31	Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Innovation	Jokela P., Elo M. (2015)	1	Finland
	Total		45	

Figure 1
Systematic Search Process

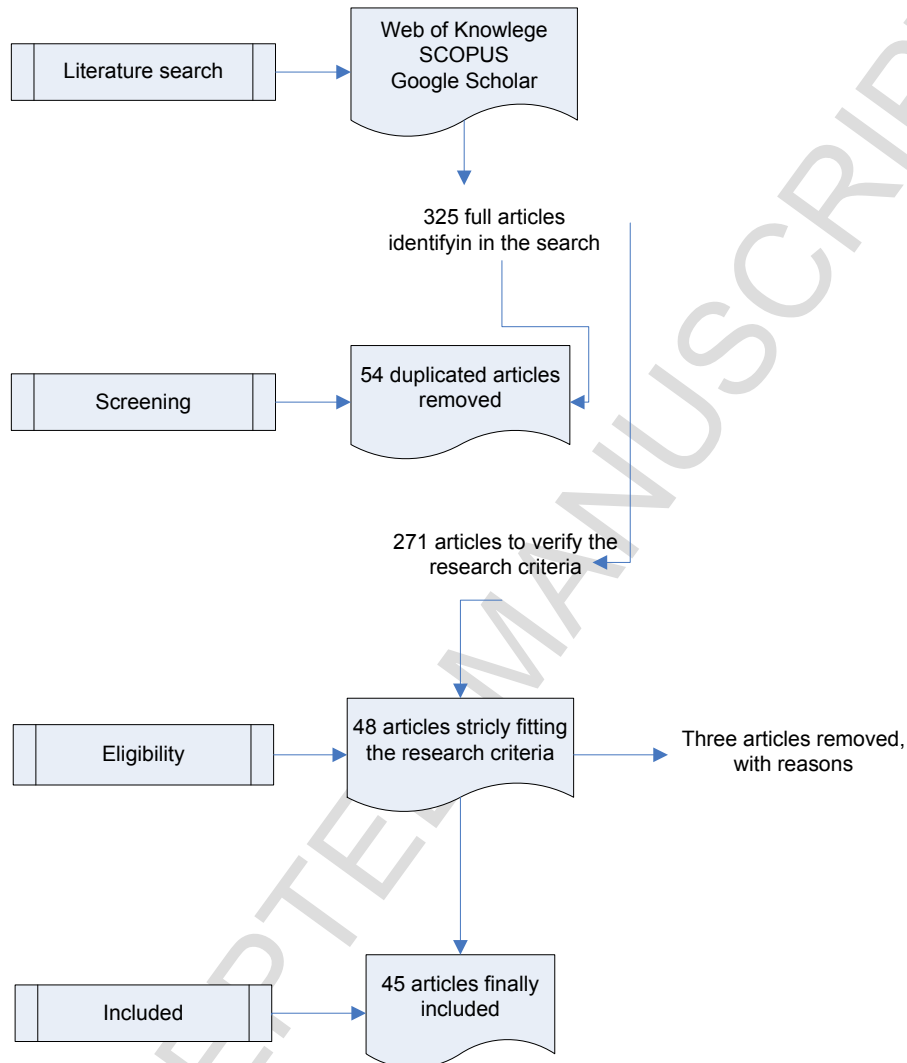


Figure 2
Distribution of Studies by Country

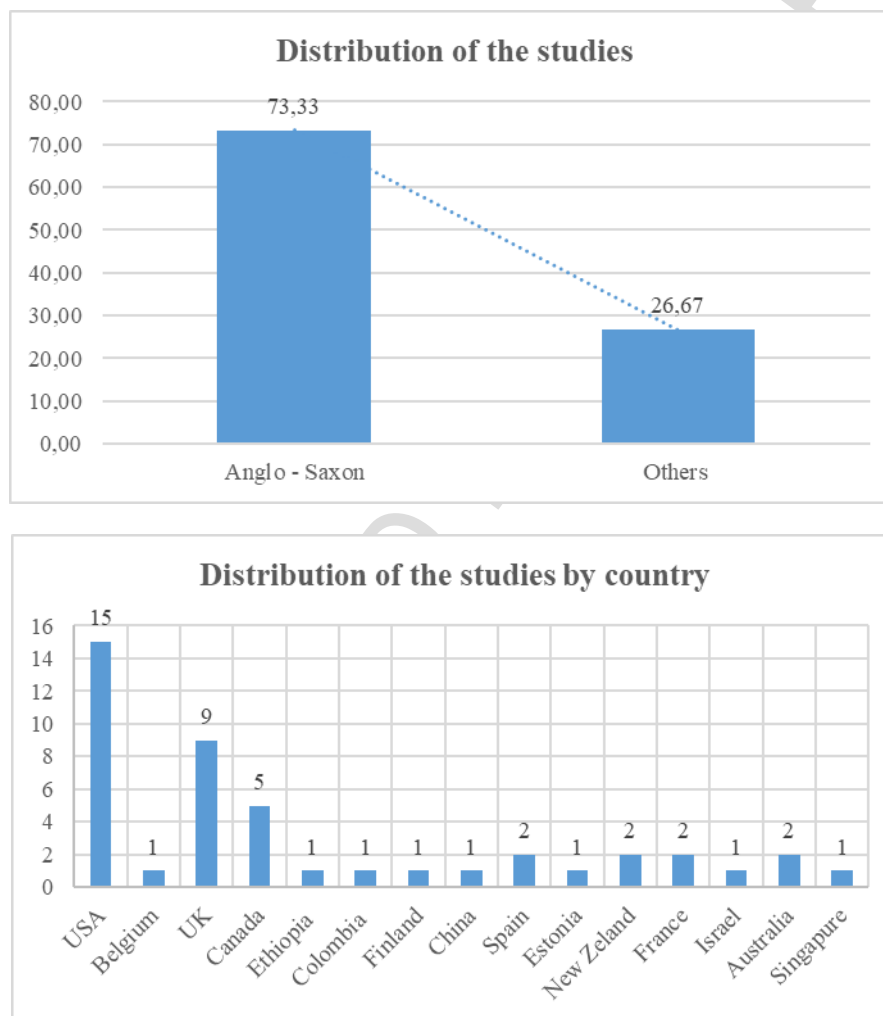


Figure 3

Sub-categorization of Memes of Intentions/promises in SE

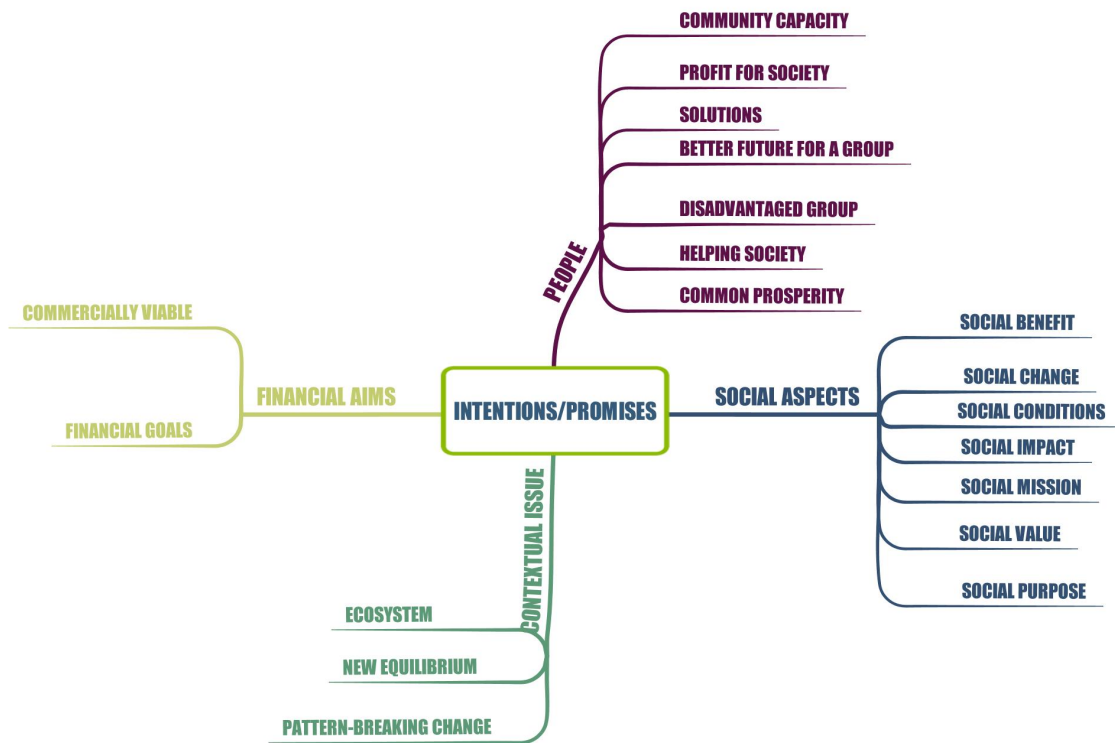


Table 3

Scholars Usage of Memes Related to Statements Intentions/Promises

Sub-categories	2003 – 2005	2006 – 2010	2011 _ 2015	Total
People	8	6	1	14
Social aspects	11	25	10	47
Contextual issues	2	3	0	5
Financial aims	0	0	3	3
Total	21	34	14	69

Figure 4

Sub-categorization of Memes of Entrepreneurial Opportunities in SE

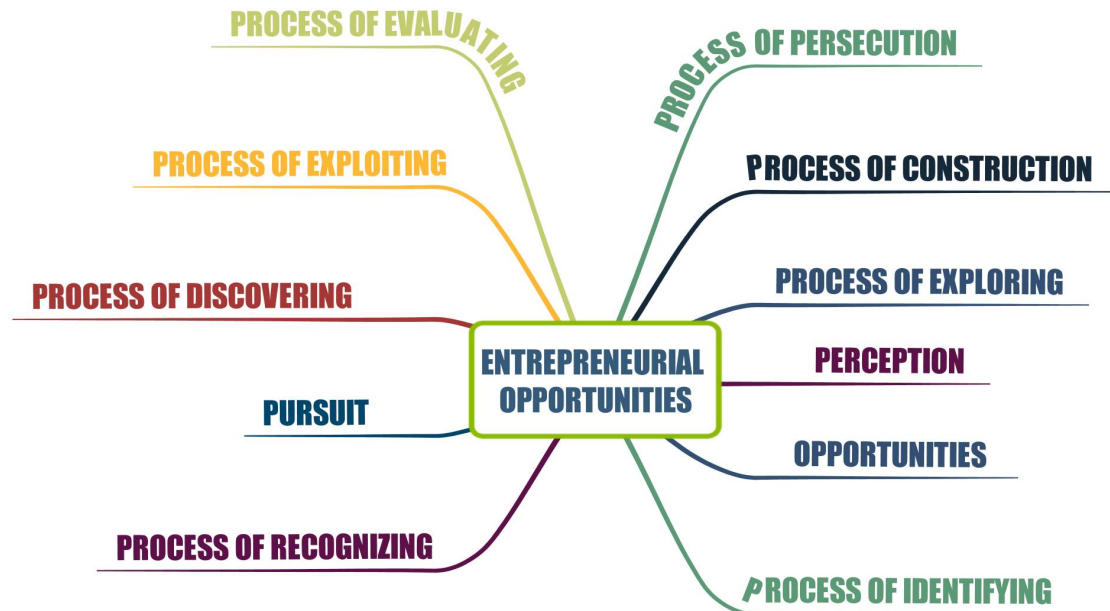


Table 4

Scholars Usage of Memes Related to Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Sub-categories	2003 – 2005	2006 – 2010	2011 _ 2015	Total
Perception		1		1
Opportunities	3	9	4	16
Pursuit	1	1	1	3
Process of identifying	0	0	1	1
Process of evaluating	1	2	2	5
Process of exploiting	0	3	2	5
Process of discovering	0	1	1	2
Process of construction	1	2	0	3
Process of recognize	2	2	0	4
Process of exploring	0	0	1	1
Process of persecution	0	1	0	1
Total	8	22	12	42

Figure 5

Sub-categorization of Memes of Entities in SE

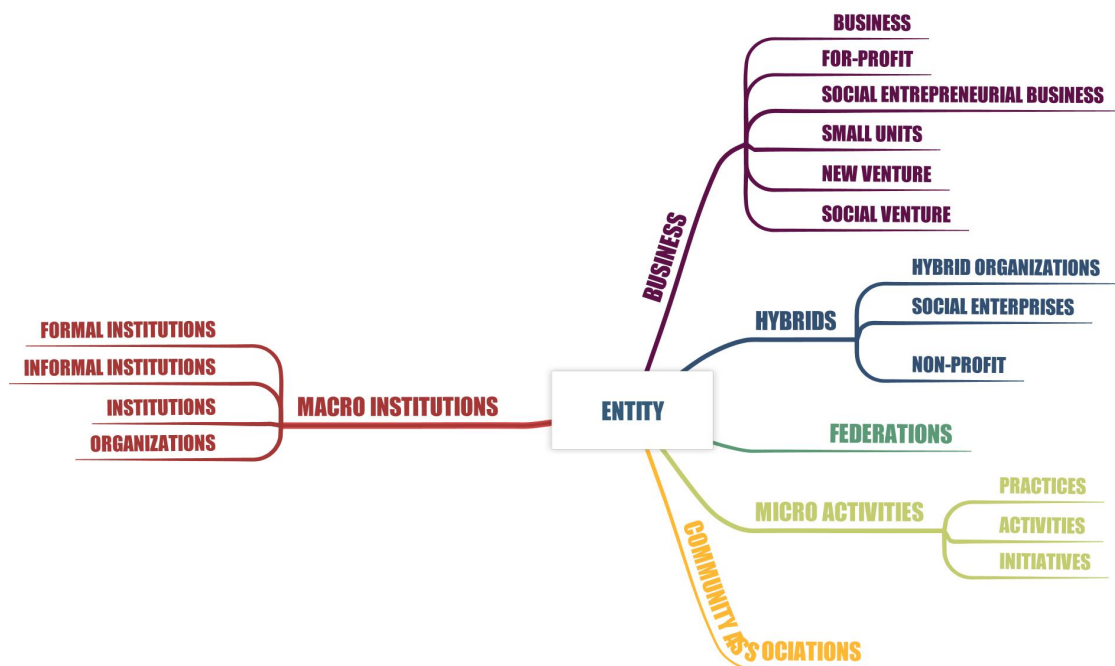


Table 5

Scholars Usage of Memes Related to Types of Entity Over Time

Sub-categories	2000 – 2005	2006 – 2010	2011 _ 2015	Total
Micro activities	2	2	4	8
Business	5	10	1	16
Hybrids	7	8	2	17
Community associations	0	1	0	1
Federations	0	1	0	1
Macro institutions	3	7	5	15
Total	17	29	12	58

Annex 1. Social entrepreneurship Definitions

Authors	Definition of Social Entrepreneurship
Fowler A. (2000)	Social entrepreneurship is the creation of viable (socio-)economic structures, relations, institutions, organisations and practices that yield and sustain social benefits.
Thompson J. (2002)	Social entrepreneurship is in evidence in many profit-seeking businesses, sometimes in their strategies and activities, sometimes through donations of money and time ...the main world of the social entrepreneur is the voluntary sector. social entrepreneurs can be found in: profit-seeking businesses that have some commitment to doing good and helping society and the environment with their strategies and financial donations; social enterprises which are set up with a largely social purpose, but which are still businesses and in the voluntary sector.
Lasprogata G., Cotton M. (2003)	Social entrepreneurship means nonprofit organizations that apply entrepreneurial strategies to sustain themselves financially while having a greater impact on their social mission.
Mort G., Weerawardena J., Carnegie K. (2003)	This paper conceptualises social entrepreneurship as a multidimensional construct involving the expression of entrepreneurially virtuous behaviour to achieve the social mission, a coherent unity of purpose and action in the face of moral complexity, the ability to recognise social value-creating opportunities and key decision-making characteristics of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking.
Barendsen L., Gardner H. (2004)	Social entrepreneurship is a new version of long-existing terms such as “changemaker,” the authors suggest that entrepreneurs are both similar and different from their peers. “Like many of us, social entrepreneurs have deeply rooted beliefs, and like many of us, these beliefs are formed early. Social entrepreneurs are exceptional, however, in what they believe and how these beliefs originate”.
Alvord S., Brawn D., Letts C. (2004)	Social entrepreneurship creates innovative solutions to immediate social problems and mobilizes the ideas, capacities, resources, and social arrangements required for sustainable social transformations.
Harding R. (2004)	They are orthodox businesses with social objectives “whose surpluses are principally re-invested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners”. This means that any attempt to measure social enterprise has to be capable of identifying those businesses generating revenue from their activities that can be reinvested in their business or their community to meet their social goals. Our results suggest that social entrepreneurship generally, and social enterprise in particular is an important, albeit relatively new, phenomenon. This still does little to demonstrate the vital importance of these businesses as engines of wealth creation.
Haugh H. (2005)	In bringing together social purpose and entrepreneurial spirit, social enterprises might be described as hybrid organisations: they are autonomous (EMES 1999) and trade, they might generate profit, they employ people and engage volunteers and adopt innovative strategies in pursuit of their social purpose.

Hibert S., Hogg G., Quinn T. (2005)	Social entrepreneurship can be loosely defined as the use of entrepreneurial behaviour for social ends rather than for profit objectives, or alternatively, that the profits generated are used for the benefit of a specific disadvantaged group.
Robert D., Woods C. (2005)	Social entrepreneurship could be defined as ‘the construction, evaluation and pursuit of opportunities for social change’. While this definition builds on the work from the conventional field of entrepreneurship, it also has distinct differences.
Seelos C., Mair J. (2005)	Social entrepreneurship creates new models for the provision of products and services that cater directly to basic human needs that remain unsatisfied by current economic or social institutions. SE recognizes and acts upon what others miss: opportunities to improve systems, create solutions, and invent new approaches.
Tan W., Williams J., Tan T. (2005)	A legal person is a social entrepreneur from t1 to t2 just in case that person attempts from t1 to t2, to make profits for society or a segment of it by innovation in the face of risk, in a way that involves that society or segment of it.
Austin J., Stevenson H., Wei-Skillern J. (2006)	We define social entrepreneurship as innovative, social value creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, business, or government sectors.
Korosec R., Berman E. (2006)	Social entrepreneurship (sometimes also called civic entrepreneurship) involves private individuals and organizations taking the initiative to address social challenges in their communities.
Light P. (2006)	Social entrepreneurship does not have to start with individual commitment. It can also come from small groups or teams of individuals, organizations, networks, or even communities that band together to create pattern-breaking change. Social entrepreneurship is more about the idea than the process. This assumption moves the field away from questions about who becomes an entrepreneur to a focus on what they seek, again expanding the number of social entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurship can involve pattern-breaking ideas about not only what gets done, but also how it happens. This moves the field toward defining entrepreneurship in a broader way that includes organizational and administrative reforms, as well as “using old stuff in new ways.” It recognizes that social entrepreneurship is often driven by teams and organizations, not just individuals. It recognizes that social entrepreneurship occurs in many different sectors (governments, non-profits, businesses, and in between), not just in non-profits. And it recognizes that entrepreneurship can occur in small units within large organizations and in single chapters within large federations, not just in the new organizations that social entrepreneurs often create.
Mair J., Marti I. (2006)	We view social entrepreneurship broadly, as a process involving the innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities to catalyze social change and/or address social needs.
Paredo A., McLean M. (2006)	Social entrepreneurship is exercised where some person or group: (1) aim(s) at creating social value, either exclusively or at least in some prominent way; (2) show(s) a capacity to recognize and take advantage of opportunities to create that value (“envision”); (3) employ(s) innovation, ranging from outright invention to adapting someone else’s novelty, in creating and/or distributing social value; (4) is/are willing to accept an above-average degree of risk in creating and disseminating social value; and (5) is/are unusually resourceful in being relatively undaunted by scarce assets in pursuing their social venture.
Sharir M., Lerner M. (2006)	The definition we use to characterize the activities of the social entrepreneur is acting as a change agent to create and sustain social value without being limited to resources currently in hand.
Weerawardena J., Mort G. (2006)	We define social entrepreneurship as a behavioural phenomenon expressed in a NFP organization context aimed at

	delivering social value through the exploitation of perceived opportunities...
Chell E. (2007)	Entrepreneurs (both social and economic) consciously garner alienable resources (e.g. through networking and other processes) and use their personal or human 'capital' in order to achieve their espoused mission of wealth and social value creation... a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners.
Martin R., Osberg S. (2007)	Social entrepreneurship as having the following three components: (1) identifying a stable but inherently unjust equilibrium that causes the exclusion, marginalization, or suffering of a segment of humanity that lacks the financial means or political clout to achieve any transformative benefit on its own; (2) identifying an opportunity in this unjust equilibrium, developing a social value proposition, and bringing to bear inspiration, creativity, direct action, courage, and fortitude, thereby challenging the stable state's hegemony; and (3) forging a new, stable equilibrium that releases trapped potential or alleviates the suffering of the targeted group, and through imitation and the creation of a stable ecosystem around the new equilibrium ensuring a better future for the targeted group and even society at large.
Tracey P., Jarvis O. (2007)	Social entrepreneurship is often defined as innovation that leads to positive social change regardless of the mechanisms through which it is achieved (i.e., through earned income and/or contributed income).
Dees G. (2007)	Social entrepreneurship engages the problem-solving skills and local knowledge of many individuals and organizations in search of innovative solutions. As a result, it has some powerful advantages over centralized policy analysis and planning.
Vega G., Kidwell R. (2007)	The social entrepreneur as an individual who addresses a serious societal problem with innovative ideas and approaches that have not been tried successfully by private, public, or non-profit sector entities. We differentiate social entrepreneurs from traditional non-profits, nongovernmental organizations, and philanthropists (1) by the innovative means that social entrepreneurs develop in solving problems and (2) by social entrepreneurs' realization that, to varying degrees, they cannot accomplish their goals without money; they are risk takers who balance social activism with some degree of business savvy.
Cochran P. (2007)	Social entrepreneurship is the process of applying the principles of business and entrepreneurship to social problems. Social enterprises are enterprises devoted to solving social problems. The reason for their existence is not to maximize return to shareholders, but to make a positive social impact.
Certo T., Miller T. (2008)	Social entrepreneurship involves the recognition, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities that result in social value — the basic and long-standing needs of society — as opposed to personal or shareholder wealth.
Guzman A., Trujillo M. (2008)	Las discusiones precedentes permiten presentar una definición de emprendimiento social, entendiéndolo como un tipo específico de emprendimiento que busca soluciones para problemas sociales a través de la construcción, evaluación y persecución de oportunidades que permitan la generación de valor social sostenible, alcanzando equilibrios nuevos y estables en relación con las condiciones sociales, a través de la acción directa llevada a cabo por organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro, empresas u organismos gubernamentales.
Farmer J., Kilpatrick S. (2009)	Social entrepreneurship involves "formally or informally generating community associations or networking that produced social outcomes". Drivers for activity initiation or involvement included perceiving needs and ways to

	address these from the perspective of a health professional, enjoying involvement, personal or family interests and feelings of obligation. Identifying opportunities was often related to envisioning solutions to patients' or community challenges or seeing 'spaces' to introduce initiatives seen elsewhere. Strategies for mustering people and financial resources drew on over-layering of skills, knowledge and perceptions coming from being a health professional, being a community member and personal attributes. Degrees of freedom to generate activity appeared associated with role status. Participants recognised beneficial health and social outcomes arising from their activities, many reported a personal 'buzz' from involvement and some described deliberately building community capacity.
Nicholls A. (2009)	Social entrepreneurship is defined here as any innovative action that individuals, organizations, or networks conduct to enhance or reconfigure existing institutional arrangements to address the inadequate provision, or unequal distribution, of social and environmental goods.
Murphy P., Coombes S. (2009)	We conceptualize social entrepreneurial discovery based on an extension of corporate social responsibility into social entrepreneurship contexts.
Zahra S. et al. (2009)	social entrepreneurship encompasses the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner.
Swanson L., Zhang D. (2010)	This concept positions social entrepreneurship based on the types of approaches organizations plan to apply to implement social change and the level of business practices they adopt to support these methods for change. Some organizations from each of the not-for-profit, for-profit, and public sectors fit within these boundaries. We have divided the social entrepreneurship zone into two regions distinguished by the nature of the plans organizations have for implementing positive social change. The social improvement region of the social entrepreneurship zone is home to social improvement entrepreneurial ventures (SIEVs). These organizations do more than simply act in a socially responsible manner because they include social change as part of their missions. They plan to induce this change in indirect ways like supporting some forms of advocacy or engaging in philanthropy. Positive social change might also occur as a by-product of the work they do. Social transformation entrepreneurial ventures (STEVs) reside in the social transformation region.
Meyskens M. et al. (2010)	This study utilizes an RBV perspective to empirically assess the resource-based operational processes of social entrepreneurs. RBV is appropriate for an evaluation of social entrepreneurs because it does not focus solely on performance. RBV is concerned with the combination and management of resources and how these resources flow within an organization to lead to more effective processes.
Nicholls A. (2010)	It has proposed that social entrepreneurship is in a pre-paradigmatic state of development that allows resource-rich actors to shape its legitimization discourses in a self-reflexive way. Moreover, it has suggested that this process is prioritizing two discourses: narratives based on hero entrepreneur success stories and organizational models reflecting ideal types from commercial business. The former supports internal logics that legitimate new venture philanthropic practices while the latter endorses internal logics that legitimate efficiency and the marketization of the state.
Tapsell P., Woods C. (2010)	the construction and pursuit of opportunities for transformative social change through innovative activities occurring within or across economic and social communities in a historical and cultural context

Bacq S., Janssen F. (2011)	Social entrepreneurship is the process of identifying, evaluating and exploiting opportunities aiming at social value creation by means of commercial, market-based activities and of the use of a wide range of resources
Dacin T., Dacin P., Tracey P. (2011)	Social entrepreneurship focusing on the last factor—the primary mission of the social entrepreneur being one of creating social value by providing solutions to social problems—holds the most promise for the field.
Parenson T. (2011)	Social entrepreneurship means the activity of social enterprises. Social entrepreneurship is concerned with enterprise for a social purpose and involves building organisations that have the capacity to be both commercially viable and socially constructive.
Montgomery W., Dacin P., Dacin T. (2012)	We define collective social entrepreneurship as collaboration amongst similar as well as diverse actors for the purpose of applying business principles to solving social problems... Collective social entrepreneurship serves to leverage existing resources, build new resources, and impact the emergence and reshaping of institutional arrangements to support scalable efforts for change.
Santos F. (2012)	Social entrepreneurship is the pursuit of sustainable solutions to neglected problems with positive externalities. Social entrepreneurship is not specifically about creating market mechanisms or securing government subsidies or creating a social enterprise, it is about crafting effective and sustainable solutions using whatever combination of institutional means is deemed effective.” This is indeed compatible with the view of social entrepreneurship as an umbrella concept with plenty of room for different sorts of initiative tackling social problems.
Bacq S., Hartog, C., Hoogendoorn B. (2013)	We broadly define social entrepreneurial activity as ‘individuals, organizations or initiatives engaged in entrepreneurial activities with a social goal. This definition reflects some basic assumptions about social entrepreneurship on which the empirical part of this study is based: (1) social entrepreneurship is a process of entrepreneurial activities that include discovering, evaluating, and pursuing opportunities and that does not necessarily involve new venture creation; (2) social entrepreneurship includes formally constituted and informal organizations and activities initiated and launched by individuals or teams; (3) social entrepreneurship intentionally aims to pursue a social goal but may also pursue other objectives such as financial ones.
Agafonow A. (2014)	Contrary to Santos, we maintain that by refocusing the theory on the organizational level and away from the system it is possible to understand that not all organizational solutions available to social entrepreneurs are able to create value, and not all value capture strategies can serve a social goal. Indeed, there is only one form of organization that fulfils Santos’s criteria of maximizing on value creation, while satisficing on value capture and that is the social enterprise.
Bacq S., Hartog C., Hoogendoorn B. (2014)	We use a broad definition of social entrepreneurship as encapsulating the individuals, the organizations, and the initiatives engaged in entrepreneurial activities with a social goal.
Lan H. et al. (2014)	Social entrepreneurship focus on the process of creating value by combining different resources in an innovative way, and particularly in exploring and exploiting opportunities to create common prosperity.
Jokela P., Elo M. (2015)	Social entrepreneurship, focusing on ventures that are founded to fulfil a social mission, based on an observed opportunity and innovation, with the aim of creating sustainable social value for the target audiences.