

Louvain School of Management

Defining the 'social' in social entrepreneurship

Comparison between Europe and Southeast Asia

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship covers all economic initiatives whose main purpose is social impact and which reinvest the majority of their profits in their mission. It combines the social goals, in terms of solving a problem, and the economic goals related to the operation of the enterprise. The conducted literature review has led to a clear clarification of terms, including the economic aspect. As opposed to this, the “social aspect” consistently lacks a clear framework.

The purpose of this master thesis is to conduct a research on the topic of defining the word social in social entrepreneurship. For this, a literature review has been firstly conducted leading to the stated problematic. Finally, an assessment of practical input from actual social entrepreneurs around the globe has been conducted with help of 10 semi structured interviews. A bottom-up approach has been used to find the definition of “social aspect” and whether and how this aspect varies between Europe and Asia, and from country to country. Finally, an analysis of the gather data has been carried out.

The present work outline the major results and outcome of this study and constitutes a basic framework for future research in the field of social entrepreneurship.

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Introduction

Since the last decade, we observe an increase in popularity of social entrepreneurship (SE). The concept is more and more present in the media, politics, business and academic world. It has tremendously gained on importance in a short period of time. The question that arises naturally is what is the cause for it? In order to answer this, it is important to first understand what social entrepreneurship actually means. In simple words, this form of entrepreneurship covers all economic initiatives whose main purpose is social impact and which reinvest the majority of their profits in their mission. In short SE describes an economic activity that combines social and economic goals. It is a specific type of business that, like traditional companies, pursue economic goals but the achievement of social goals is the core of its activity. Almost in every corner of the globe, social entrepreneurs create today innovative and creative solutions to some of the biggest issues of the modern world. We have been observing for some time now, a shift in the minds of entrepreneurs and generally people worldwide. The concept of focusing less on ourselves and trying to do something good for others that are less fortunate has spread. For some, the economic profit was no longer the most important thing. Nevertheless, in order to have significant impact on local community an amount of money is still needed – that is the moment when SE steps in. Numerous benefits of social entrepreneurship have been recognized, such as: revitalizing disadvantaged communities, generating jobs, improving skills of unemployed and facilitating their re-employment. In short, social entrepreneurs are filling the gaps where the market and state were unable to act (Haugh, 2005).

Nowadays, it is almost impossible to find a universal definition of social entrepreneurship; there are simply too many various ones that have been created. Still, all of them have one similarity: they all refer to a social component, be it social value or social impact but without explaining what this “social” word actually covers. One of the problems lies in the fact that the word “social” is quite commonly used, so it may be hard to understand that despite its wide usage, the meaning of the word is not very clear. Understanding what this social component means is crucial when it comes to conducting research or even policy-making. It is hard to define a business model that SE could operate under, if the social aspect of the social entrepreneurship definition still remains a mystery. Furthermore, a consensus on this meaning would be also beneficial for all social entrepreneurs, organizations and simply anyone who is interested in this subject.

Defining the word “social” in social entrepreneurship is not an easy task. The concept is inherently complex, as it builds on different fields and disciplines, and the angles of approaching it are numerous. Additionally, the literature on this topic, despite the fact that it is diverse, is so new that little consensus has emerged. Nevertheless, it is very important to define this notion in order to be able to better understand the topic and its broader implications.

The conducted research is based on an extensive and accurate review of the available literature on this subject. Academic papers, journals and other accessible sources were taken into account. This report will firstly focus on clarifying terms that are often mistaken with social entrepreneurship. The second part consists of literature review on the topic of social entrepreneurship with a strong focus on the social aspect and possible ways of defining it. Finally, in order to get a better understanding of the lived experience of the social dimension of social entrepreneurship, the empirical part consists of 10 semi-structured interviews conducted with social entrepreneurs. The aim of these interviews is to sustain the general idea of this paper and to gather more recent opinions from the business world to form a ‘bottom-up’ understanding of the ‘social’ in social entrepreneurship.

1. Clarification of terms

Before passing to the literature review of social entrepreneurship as well as to the practical part, it is firstly important to understand the general meaning of SE and the terms related to it. Mainly, due to the complexity of this concept and its similarities to others, social entrepreneurship is often confused with corporate social responsibility (CSR), NGOs, NPOs, social innovation or even entrepreneurship. Even though most of these ideas do have some points in common, there are also striking differences. Thus, the reader can find below a clarification of the above-mentioned terms as well as of differences between them and SE. It is worth mentioning that due to the absence of an unifying paradigm, ‘social entrepreneurship’, ‘social entrepreneur’ and ‘social entrepreneurship organization’ are often used interchangeably to express the same idea (Bacq & Janssen, 2011). It is important to underline that the section below intends only to clarify and differentiate each term from SE. Any normative question of which actions is more beneficial and should be implemented goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

1.1 Entrepreneurship

The first and potentially most important concept is entrepreneurship itself. Even by only looking at the name, we know that both of these ideas are very closely related to each other; social entrepreneurship was built on entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is important to understand the meaning of it.

Entrepreneurship, in the broad sense, is the process of creating a new disruptive business (small or medium) and managing it, along with the associated risk, in order to obtain profit. Entrepreneurs are often innovative and risk-takers (BusinessDictionary, 2019). They need to be because launching a new business involves high risks. Most of the start-ups nowadays are failing very quickly either due to bad timing, lack of market demand or funds. Moreover, in order to be competitive and profitable, the business needs to have a commercially viable innovation.

Entrepreneurship is of interest to many scientific disciplines, including economics, law, demography, sociology, psychology and management. The multidimensionality of this concept causes a natural lack of definitional compatibility (Gruszecki, 2007), hence, defining the concept is not an easy task. The term ‘entrepreneur’ appeared in the economic literature between the seventeenth and eighteenth century. It comes from the French word ‘entrepreneur’, which describes a person undertaking some activity or implementing a project. It is safe to say that entrepreneurship exists since the appearance of the human kind but the

meaning of the term has evolved over the years (Łochnicka, 2016). French economist R. Cantillon and English economist J.B. Say were the precursors of entrepreneurship studies. R. Cantillon raised several aspects that constitute the essence of understanding entrepreneurship. These include, among others: risk and uncertainty faced by the entrepreneur as a person making a decision about running a business and distinguishing the role of the capitalist from the role of the entrepreneur. The entrepreneur undertakes a risk that is impossible to estimate in order to make a profit. Moreover, in contrast to a capitalist, an entrepreneur does not need to have its own capital; he can raise the needed funds. In turn, J.B. Say defined entrepreneurship as such behaviour of an entrepreneur that transfers economic resources from the area of lower productivity to the area of higher efficiency, increasing their use and profit. Hence, the economic efficiency of a resource is a decisive factor in entrepreneurial activities (Gąsiorowska-Mącznik, 2017). These definitions were some of the first ones but since then, many different researches tried to come up with more adequate ones. The table below shows a few of the most common definitions of entrepreneurship.

Table 1: Definitions of entrepreneurship

Author	Definitions
Cole (1968)	The entrepreneurship is an activity dedicated to initiation, maintenance and development of a profit oriented business.
Drucker (1985)	The entrepreneurship is an innovation act who presupposes the endowment of the existing resources with the capacity of producing wealth.
Gartner (1985)	The entrepreneurship is the creation of new organizations.
Hisrich and Peters (1989)	The entrepreneurship is the process of creating something different, with value, by allotting the necessary time and effort, presupposing the taking of financial, social and physical risks, and obtaining monetary rewards and personal satisfaction.
Stevenson et al. (1989)	The entrepreneurship is following an opportunity irrespective of the existing resources.
Kaish and Gilad (1991)	The entrepreneurship is first of all a discovery process and secondly is the process of acting on an opportunity of lack of balance.
Herron and Robinson (1993)	The entrepreneurship is a set of behaviours which initiate and manage the re-allotment of economic resources and whose purpose is the creation of value by these means.

Source: Misra, S., & Kumar, E. S. (2000). *Resourcefulness: A Proximal Conceptualisation of Entrepreneurial Behaviour*. The Journal of Entrepreneurship, 9(2), 135–154. doi:10.1177/097135570000900201

One of the definitions that describes it best is that entrepreneurship is a way of acting, involving the tendency to take new, risky and unconventional ventures, and to demonstrate initiative in their search and implementation (Kortan, 1997). All the above mentioned definitions play a major role in understanding the idea of entrepreneurship and without it we would have been unable to understand social entrepreneurship.

As it was previously mentioned, SE is the combination of the words ‘social’ and ‘entrepreneurship’. Thus, many core characteristics are similar but some important differences exist as well. The word ‘social’ focuses on the upliftment of a population through delivering a radical change; and ‘entrepreneur’ focuses on the idea of identifying and acting on an opportunity that others do not notice. Furthermore, entrepreneurs are mainly motivated by the opportunity of a financial gain whereas social entrepreneurs by altruism (Kochar, 2016). This means that while traditional entrepreneur primarily defines the ability to run a business and generate profits, which are the criteria of success here, a social entrepreneur is characterized mainly by the desire to create social value for the target group or the whole society (Stirāne, 2018).

To summarize, an entrepreneur will produce a product that will reply to the market’s need whilst making a financial profit. A social entrepreneur does not anticipate nor creates the product in order to achieve financial profit for himself or his investors. His goal is to create a transformational benefit for a society. Therefore, the beneficiaries of his idea are underprivileged and often neglected sections of society and not a market that can simply pay for his product.

1.2 Corporate Social Responsibility

The second term that is important to understand in this context is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Nowadays, all big corporations are involved in CSR actions. They either take part in some small initiatives or they can even have a whole department dedicated to it. It is hard to say, what exactly stands behind this phenomenon. Do companies really value CSR actions or is it mainly a way of promotion and attracting new customers as well as retaining old ones? No matter the reason, from big multinational enterprises to local businesses, people take actions and are trying to be more responsible towards the society as well as the environment and that should be admired.

Even though the term CSR is well known, it is still quite often mistaken with SE. It is a very interesting term because similarly to social entrepreneurship it contains the word ‘social’. Thus, we will try to understand what exactly stands behind it.

It is hard to define when the idea of corporate social responsibility emerged because companies already in the early 20th century were undertaking some philanthropic actions that could have been considered as CSR. Nevertheless, the term itself emerged only later on. One of the tipping points was a publication of ‘The competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy’ in 2002 in *Harvard Business Review* in which it was noted that ‘in the long

run... social and economic goals are not inherently conflict but integrally connected'. It was also stated there that instead of keeping financial and social returns separated, business should focus on projects that combine them (Porter & Kramer, 2002). We could say that since then, the companies that weren't sure if social actions could bring a potential gain for them started to look deeper into it. It cannot be said that before 2002, already existing companies weren't incorporating corporate responsibility in their actions. Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream and Yvon Chouinard of Patagonia Outdoor Clothing & Gear are the perfect examples of founders that knew right from the beginning that 'Business can be a source of progressive change'(Ben & Jerry, n.d.). Since the creation of their respective companies, they engage into multiple CSR activities. Some of Ben& Jerry activities (the list is not exhaustive) are: focusing on Fair Trade, social grants and taking a firm stand in social matters (Ben & Jerry, n.d.). Similarly, Patagonia is donating 1% of their annual sales to environmental charities, creating solutions to sustainability issues and they also incorporated a new business model that allows them to grow responsibly (CSR Central, 2015).

The European Commission defined Corporate Social Responsibility as *'the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society'*. In order to become more socially responsible companies can: follow the law, integrate social, environmental, human rights and ethical concerns into their operations as well as business strategy (European Union Commission, 2019). In other words, CSR is a way of managing a for-profit business in a way that is beneficial to other stakeholders than the owners of the company and investors. It should have a direct non-financial gain and benefits to parties such as: consumers, employees, communities or environment. CSR is nowadays considered as a *'voluntary managerial approach to sustainable development'*, at the base of which business ethics can be found. (Szegedi, Fülöp, & Bereczk, 2016). To put it simply, the basis for the concept of social responsibility is the belief that it should contribute to the growth of the company's value by creating a shared value for the society (Kuraszko & Rok, 2007). Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer in 'The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility' stated that CSR can be something more than exposing yourself to additional costs, an obligation or a good deed - it can be a source of opportunities, innovation and competitive advantage. Therefore, if to treat the social responsibility of business strategically, it can become a source of significant social progress because the company invests a certain part of its resources, its knowledge and skills in activities that benefit the society (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

In 2010, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) published a set of standards meant to guide companies in implementing corporate social responsibility. The ISO 26000 cannot be certified as it only provides guidance and not requirements. Those standards are useful for all organizations regardless of their size, activity or location. Many important stakeholders contributed to establishing ISO 26000, thus, we can say that it provides an international consensus on the topic of CSR (International Organization for Standardization, 2010).

The only question that is left is, what is the difference between social entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility? One of the main differences lies in the fact that the latter does not give priority to the social role but it does incorporate it (Bacq & Janssen, 2011). We could also say that a social enterprise is proactive and CSR is reactive, when it comes to its approach to social change. A social enterprise's foundation is its social impact. In the case of CSR it comes later on, when through their existing practices they want to create a positive social impact. Without getting into details, a perfect example of this difference could be TOMS and Levi Strauss. TOMS is considered as a social enterprise because it was founded on the idea that for every pair of shoes they will sell, they are going to give a pair to a child in need. Nowadays, they went even further and are offering their customers a possibility to choose for which 'issue area' (giving shoes, safe water, mental health etc.) they stand (TOMS, n.d.). On the other hand, Levi Strauss's goal while creating business was to sell jeans. Only later on did they introduce CSR initiatives, such as Water<Less in 2011, thanks to which they were able to save water during production. Furthermore, they share their water-saving techniques with other companies to inspire them. They are also focusing on responsible sourcing, sustainable manufacturing, recycling, carbon footprint etc. (LEVI STRAUSS, n.d.). Levi's actions are to be admired as they create a positive change around the world, nevertheless, they were not at their business core while establishing the company. Based on this simple qualification we are able to distinguish social entrepreneurship from corporate social responsibility.

1.3 NGO & NPO

Even though these two terms do not contain the word social in them, due to their specific goals and their impact on our society they are sometimes confused with social entrepreneurship. In order to avoid any misunderstanding in further parts of this paper, they are shortly explained below.

1.3.1 Non-governmental Organization

The term non-governmental organization firstly appeared in 1945 when the United Nations Charter was adopted. NGOs are usually classified under the ‘third sector’ of the economy, not-for-profit and are addressing various social problems. As the name says, they are independent from the government and not related to any political party (Lewis, 2014). According to Kerstin Martens in ‘Mission Impossible? Defining Nongovernmental Organizations’: ‘NGOs are formal (professionalized) independent societal organizations whose primary aim is to promote common goals at the national or international level’. This definition may be a bit complicated but when analysed part by part, is one of the most comprehensive definitions to be found in the literature. According to this definition, a non-governmental organization emerges from the private sphere: their members are individuals and not governmental institutions. They work for the public good and may have a paid staff but they are not profit oriented. Private donations constitute their main financial income but they may receive funding from governmental institutions, to a limited extent. They operate on various levels: regional, national or international, depending on their activities and size (Martens, 2002, p.282). The scope of NGO’s activities can vary from informative and advocative role (e.g., International Chamber of Commerce or International Organization for Standardization) to supporting human rights and tackling poverty or environmental issues (e.g., International Committee of the Red Cross, Rotary International or Greenpeace).

1.3.2 Non-Profit Organization

Non-profit organizations are businesses that provide a public benefit either via their goods or services and are often tax-exempted, e.g., hospitals, churches, universities (Kenton, 2019). A characteristic feature of such organizations is mainly the need to allocate a financial surplus for statutory activities, which means that this surplus cannot be divided among members (employees, founders or any other stakeholders) of the organization. Those organisations mostly rely on volunteers but some employ fully paid staff as well. Nevertheless, the payment can only be a fair compensation for the work provided and not a way of obtaining a financial gain. Finally, non-profit organizations usually work to solve problems important for a given group of people or the whole community, which improves their level of life (Hernik, 2010).

When it comes to the differences between an NGO and an NPO, the first is based on the simple definition of their respective legal assumptions. One cannot be a governmental organization, the second one cannot have any financial gain due to its activities. Furthermore,

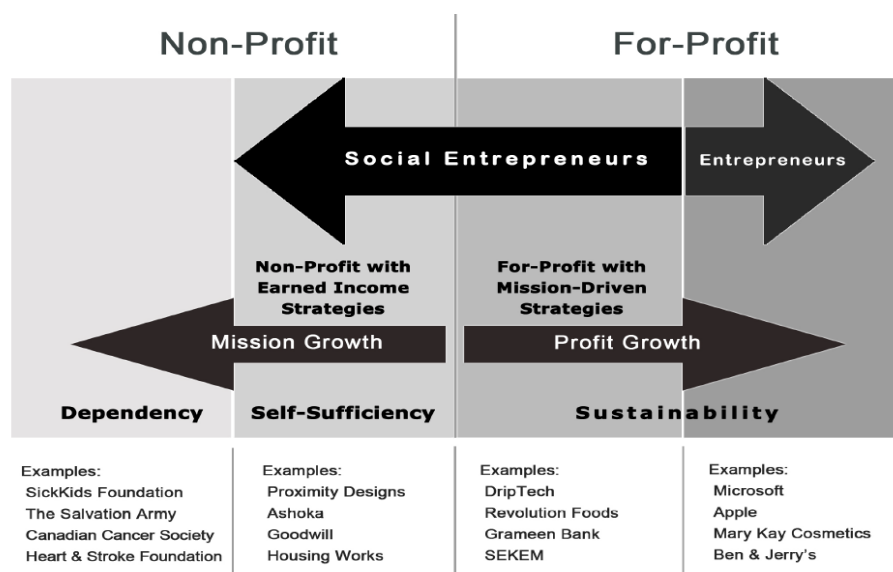
NGOs are usually operating on a larger scale, especially internationally, and their goal is to promote social change and carry out humanitarian help. In contrast, NPOs are operating in a more local scope and most of them focus more on promoting and facilitating access to art, sport, science and research, among others (Fritz, 2019).

1.3.3 NGO/NPO compared to SE

The above mentioned differences are also the key to make the distinction between NGO, NPO and SE. Non-governmental organizations as well as social entrepreneurs are trying to tackle an environmental or social issue but they have different revenue models. As it was mentioned above, NGOs are relying on grants, philanthropy and donations for financing their activities whereas SEs are providing goods or services in order to generate their proper income and become financially sustainable (Souici, 2014).

When it comes to NPO/SE it is hard to talk about a difference between those terms as they are overlapping concepts. Social entrepreneurship is a mindset, whereas non-profit organizations or social enterprises (explained in the next paragraph) are organizational business models (Social Trend Spotter, 2018). Some SE are taking the form of NPOs and some are deciding to take the form of a social enterprise. In such case they will either need to allocate their financial surplus into statutory activities or not. Taking into account different definitions of social enterprises, some NPOs could be classified as a social enterprise.

Figure 1: The entrepreneurship spectrum



Source : Abu-Saifan, S. 2012. Social Entrepreneurship: Definition and Boundaries. *Technology Innovation Management Review*. February 2012: 22-27.

1.4 Social Enterprise

Social Enterprise is one of the most common terms found in the literature alongside NGO/NFO and SE. Still, the concept is hard to define as there are different schools of thought present in the literature. On one hand, we can find definition that describes social enterprise as a notion that can be applied to for-profit, non-profit as well as government activity, as it is considered to be an organization that via the products or services that it sells, generates positive externalities and makes efforts to increase their positive impact and reduce the negative one (Bielefeld, 2009). Thus, we could say that any organizational form that is concerned about social as well as economic returns can be found under the notion of social enterprise, even CSR activities. Only later on, depending on the structure, range of activities, profit redistribution and main goals, we make a division into categories.

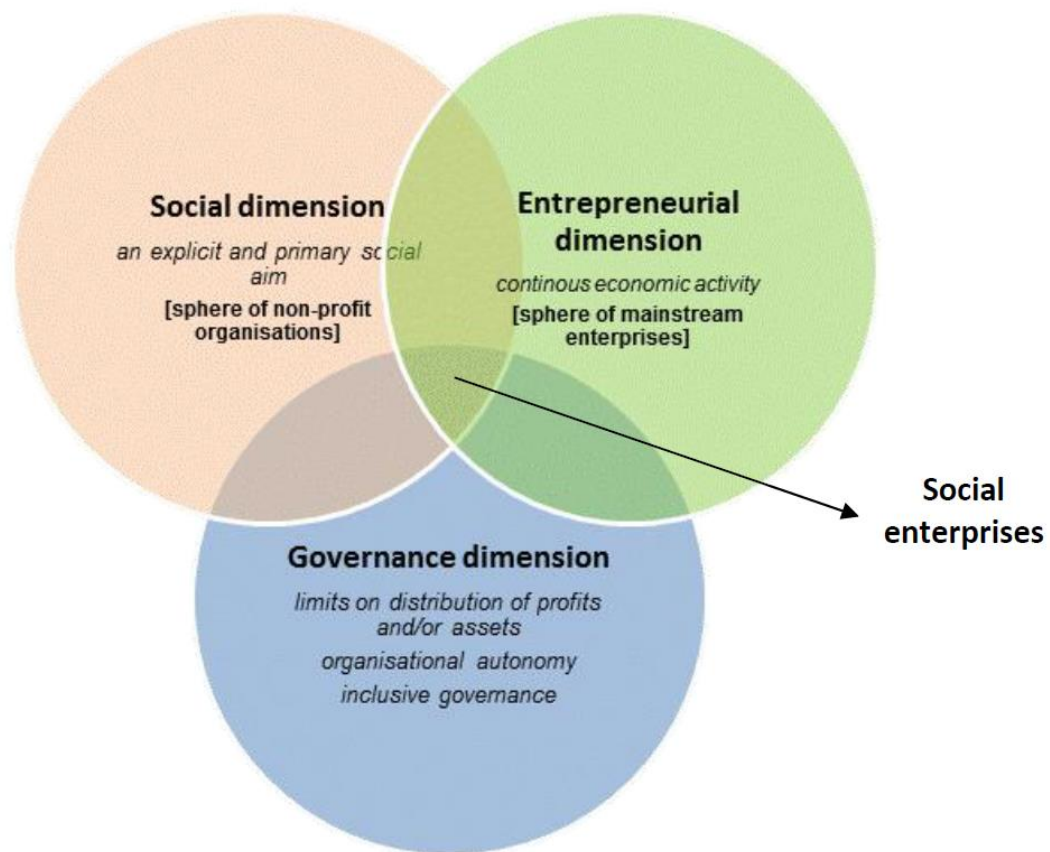
The Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA; national membership organization for social enterprise in the United States), proposes the following simple working definition: ‘Organizations that address a basic unmet need or solve a social or environmental problem through a market-driven approach’ (Social Enterprise Alliance, 2019). Under this definition, again, social enterprises cover a broad spectrum ranging from for-profit to non-profit entities. The SEA describes three general models under which social enterprises operate: ‘opportunity employment’, ‘transformative products or services’ or ‘donate back’. In the first category, all organizations that provide employment for people with significant difficulties for entering the employment market can be found. The second category includes organizations that via innovative products and services create a positive social or environmental impact. The last category assembles organizations that are redistributing a portion of their profit towards non-profit organizations. Taking the above into account, it can be easily assumed that the US definition is very broad and includes various business models.

On the other hand, many definitions that are found in the literature (especially European) are associating social enterprises with the third sector of the economy. In this case, social enterprises are usually of the non-profit type and they are established with the purpose of creating a positive social impact and not only incorporating it in their activities (Nyssens, 2006). Furthermore, according to the United Kingdom’s government, a social enterprise can be defined as: ‘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 maximise profit for shareholder and owners’ (Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2011). First of all, the concept of the ‘triple bottom line’ is stressed, it means that social aspect does not exclude profit. It is even advised to operate under these conditions as

the organisation can attain financial sustainability, which is crucial in the long-term. Secondly, the emphasis is also laid on limited redistribution aspect. The profit is mainly reinvested in conducted social activities or statutory activities; it does not maximize shareholder value.

Another interesting and very comprehensive definition, is the one provided by the EMES Network. At first the definition distinguished 2 types of subsets: 4 economic indicators and 5 social indicators (Nyssens, 2006, pp. 5-6). Later on, in comparison to the American schools of thought, these 9 indicators were divided into three subsets: *'economic and entrepreneurial dimensions'*, *'social dimensions'* and *'participatory governance'*. When it comes to the economic dimensions, 3 criteria can be found: *a continuous activity producing and selling goods and/or services; a significant level of economic risk; a minimum amount of paid work.* Concerning the social dimension, 3 criteria can be distinguished: *an explicit aim to benefit the community; an initiative launched by a group of citizens; limited profit distribution.* Lastly, 3 criteria can be found as well in the participatory governance subcategory: *a high degree of autonomy; decision-making power not based on capital ownership; a participatory nature, which involves the various parties affected by the activity* (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012, pp. 12-15). The above mentioned dimensions can be summarized into: 'Social enterprises are not-for-profit private organizations providing goods or services directly related to their explicit aim to benefit the community. They rely on collective dynamics involving various types of stakeholders in their governing bodies, they place high value on their autonomy and they bear economic risks linked to their activity' (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008). The figure below presents the 3 dimensions of a social enterprise and was extracted from 'A map of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe' created by the European Commission. This document offers a very interesting and thorough analysis of social enterprises in Europe.

Figure 2: The three dimensions of a social enterprise



Source: European Commission. (2015). A map of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe. Retrieved from: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=12987&langId=en>

At this point it is also important to mention that social enterprises often operate under the 'hybrid business model'. Part of their revenues is derived from the market via their economic activity and the second part comes from non-market sources such as grants, private donations, government subsidies etc. (European Union Commission, 2015).

As it was mentioned before, there exist different schools of thoughts on this concept. The most visible difference between them is the aspect of profit distribution - most of the European definitions accentuate the limits of the profit distribution, whereas in the USA social enterprises can be also for-profit. In this thesis, the European approach will be used.

Regardless of the differences in the definitions, social enterprises are filling the gaps overlooked by private and public sectors. They address various problems such as: homelessness, lack of employment skills, drug abuse issues, etc. and are coming up with solutions for them. It is important to stress the many advantages that social enterprises offer. They are successful in combating social exclusion, reviving deprived areas, providing work for unemployed and simply offering solutions to hard-to-reach groups (Cornelius, Todres, Janjuha-Jivraj, Woods, & Wallace, 2008).

2. Literature review

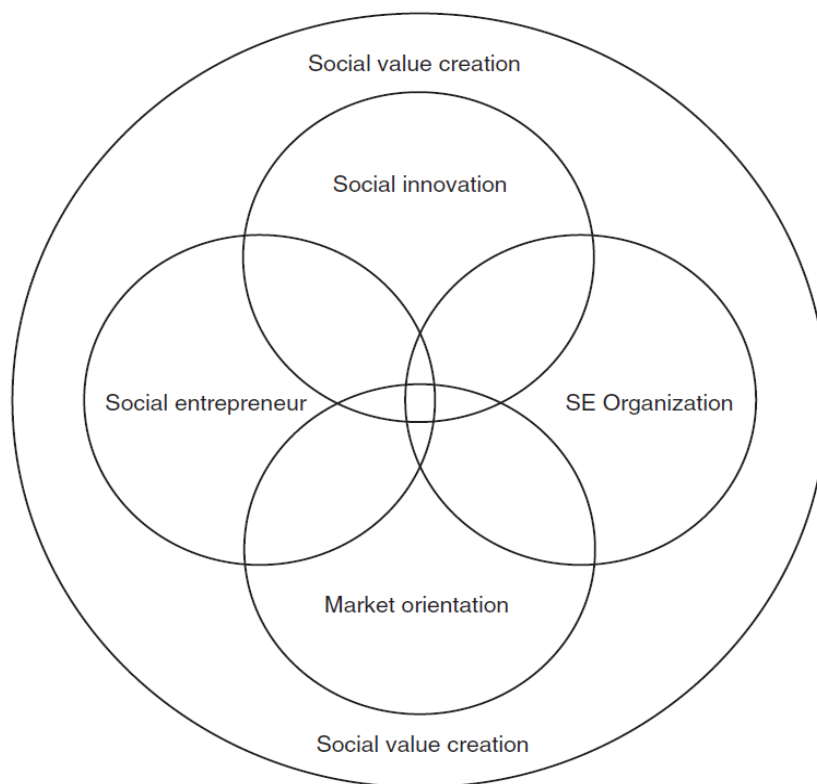
The term “social entrepreneurship” in the past years gained tremendously on importance. It is actively promoted by leading foundations in the field, such as: Ashoka, the Schwab Foundation and the Skoll Foundation. Governments in many countries are also trying to contribute to this field by creating new organizational frameworks or even by providing funding. Universities are setting up social entrepreneurship centres and new scientific journals on the topic of social innovation, social enterprise and SE have been launched (Choi & Majumdar, 2014). There are many possible reasons for this. One could be the fact that social entrepreneurship manages to come up with an innovative idea that creates a new product or service that improves drastically people’s lives. The stories of social entrepreneurs are also somehow very appealing to the public. It is not surprising, if we look for example at the story of Muhammad Yunus who in 2006 was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for establishing Grameen Bank and introducing the concepts of microfinancing and microcredits. Despite this increase in popularity and many implemented actions all around the world, the definition of SE is anything but clear (Martin & Osberg, 2007). In the following part of the thesis a literature review will be conducted in order to answer the question, if it is possible to find a universal definition of social entrepreneurship and how the social aspect is defined.

2.1 Complexity of the term

Social entrepreneurship is a very complex term. The lack of consensus between the scholars as well as practitioners has resulted in various and numerous definitions and approaches. One of the possible reasons for this might be the fact that SE is linked to various contexts such as: political, economic and cultural (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). When a term is deeply rooted in so many fields, finding a universal definition seems almost impossible. Furthermore, according to Choi and Majumdar, social entrepreneurship is an essentially contested concept. The theory of essentially contested concepts was proposed by Walter Bryce Gallie in 1956. It suggests that there exists a group of concepts which surely lead to continues disputes about their proper meaning. Those concepts share specific characteristics specified in seven key conditions: *‘appraisiveness, internal complexity, various describability, openness, aggressive and defensive uses, original exemplar and progressive competition’*. Based on the conducted analysis in the paper, social entrepreneurship fulfils the above mentioned criteria and can be regarded as an essentially contested concept. Therefore, finding a universal definition that could be accepted by different parties is hardly possible. Nevertheless, the authors propose *‘a conceptual understanding of social entrepreneurship as a cluster concept’*. According to this

idea, social entrepreneurship can be seen as a conglomerate of the following sub-concepts: ‘*social value creation, the social entrepreneur, the social entrepreneurship organization, market orientation and social innovation*’. As these sub-concepts can be considered as basic characteristics of SE, any definition of social entrepreneurship must contain some of these sub-concepts. Except for the social value creation - sub-concept which is considered as a precondition - the cluster concept does not specify how many or which sub-concepts have to be present in a definition. The authors strongly believe that the cluster concept understanding of SE can be a useful tool for future research, especially taking into account the fact that various researches haven been conducted on each of the sub-concepts separately. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the sub-concepts of social innovation, social entrepreneur and social value creation are themselves contested concepts, maybe even essentially contested concepts (Choi & Majumdar, 2014). The work of Choi and Majumdar provides an interesting approach for analysing the social entrepreneurship concept. However, SE as well as some of the sub-concepts are contested concepts, which means that finding a universal definition for each of them is a very challenging, if not impossible, task. Still, we will take a closer look at the available definitions in order to find some common points.

Figure 3: Social entrepreneurship as a cluster concept



Source : Choi, N., & Majumdar, S. (2014). Social entrepreneurship as an essentially contested concept: Opening a new avenue for systematic future research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 29(3), p. 373.

2.2 Historical background

Academics are looking for the origins of social entrepreneurship in the works of such authors as: J. Banks, A. Etzion, N. Chambarlain (Nicholls, 2006). Banks (1972) was the first to contain the term social entrepreneur and Drucker (1979), was the first to introduce the term social enterprise (Trivedi, 2010). Its sources in the literature can be also traced to 1983, when Young wrote on 'innovative non-profit entrepreneurs'. Another early contribution to the topic was the paper of Waddock and Post's in 1991 (Bacq & Janssen, 2011). However, the term only truly emerged in the literature in the 1990s in Anglo-Saxon countries (Pacut, 2015). Nevertheless, social entrepreneurship initiatives have existed in different forms for hundreds of years without being conceptualised (Conway Dato-on & Kalakay, 2016). From the more recent initiatives, still before the researchers started to look into this field, we could name: the Ashoka foundation founded in 1980 by Bill Drayton (provides funding to support entrepreneurs in their social mission), Grameen Bank established in 1976 by Professor Muhammad Yunus (introduced the idea of microfinancing and microloans) or the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild founded in 1968 by Bill Strickland (development of community programs) (Mair & Martí, 2006). Social entrepreneurs' actions were implemented long before the literature on the subject really emerged and the search for a universal definition began. Thus, the question arises if there is really a need for a common definition in order for social entrepreneurs to conduct their activities?

It is important to notice that social entrepreneurship is described in the literature using many different terms. English literature provides various terms to describe initiatives undertaken in this field. To express the same idea, terms such as social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship organization, social entrepreneurship and social enterprises are used. Other terms that are less often used also exist in the literature: sustainable entrepreneurship, community enterprise, sustainable entrepreneurship etc. (Pacut, 2015).

As it was mentioned previously: social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneur and social enterprise are terms that describe the same concept, just on a slightly different level of analysis. SE is a certain mindset, social entrepreneur is the person and social enterprise is the business model/legal form. Still, in a multitude of works in the literature, those 3 terms are being used in order to describe the same concept. Thus, in order not to limit the analysis and not to omit some crucial definitions in the further parts of the paper, these terms will be used interchangeably.

2.3 Definitions of social entrepreneurship

The most logical approach to defining social entrepreneurship would be first to analyse the entrepreneurship aspect of the definition, at the same time rigorously analysing the social aspect separately and in relation to each other. The difference between social entrepreneurship and commercial entrepreneurship is the social aspect of the actions, thus, it is so important to have a better understanding of it (Nicholls & Cho, 2006). This section will present the available definitions of social entrepreneurship in the literature and possible ways of approaching it.

According to R. Praszkie and A. Nowak, *‘one of the classical definitions of social entrepreneurship and the social entrepreneur is provided by Dees in 1998, who says that social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by:*

- *Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value)*
- *Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission*
- *Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning*
- *Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently at hand*
- *Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created’ (Praszkie & Nowak, 2011).*

Social entrepreneurs are change agents in the social sector. They are reformers, as commercial entrepreneurs, but with a social mission. They are introducing fundamental changes into the social sector. Nevertheless, it is *‘clearly an “idealized” definition’*. The social sector leaders, depending on various factors, will illustrate these characteristics to a given degree. The more conditions a person fulfils, the more this person fits in the ideal model of a social entrepreneur (Dees, 1998). Based on the above definition, it is visible that some of the characteristics such as: pursuing new opportunities, innovation and not being limited by resources is directly linked to the entrepreneurial part of the definition but the criterium of a mission and social value refers to the social aspect of social entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurship concept was discussed above, in the clarification of terms and it is a less contested concept, thus, the social aspect will be more emphasized.

Another interesting definition is the one created by Thompson and Doherty. They state that social enterprises can be simply defined as *‘organizations seeking business solutions to social problems’*. The distinction from other socially-oriented initiatives that benefit the community is the business aspect. Social enterprises cannot rely on funding or grants.

The authors provided a list of the following '*determining characteristics*' for a social enterprise:

- *They have a social purpose.*
- *Assets and wealth are used to create community benefit.*
- *They pursue this with (at least in part) trade in a market place.*
- *Profits and surpluses are not distributed to shareholders, as is the case with a profit-seeking business.*
- *“Members” or employees have some role in decision making and/or governance.*
- *The enterprise is seen as accountable to both its members and a wider community.*
- *There is either a double- or triple-bottom line paradigm. The assumption is that the most effective social enterprises demonstrate healthy financial and social returns – rather than high returns in one and lower returns in the other (J. D. Thompson, B, 2006).*

The last characteristic is very interesting, as it states that first of all social enterprises can have a triple-bottom line – environmental aspect would be included next to the economic and social aspect. Furthermore, it proves that the aspect of social mission and earning profit do not exclude themselves. There is a need for healthy financial returns in order to be sustainable and to be able to have social impact.

One definition that stands out, as it did not emerge from an academic perspective, is the definition from Ashoka – a well-recognized international organization that promotes social entrepreneurship created by Bill Drayton in 1980. Their mission is identifying and supporting social entrepreneurs around the world (Ashoka, n.d.-a). According to Ashoka, 'social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social, cultural and environmental challenges. They are ambitious and persistent – tackling major issues and offering new ideas for system-level change (Ashoka, n.d.-b).

As it has been demonstrated, the definitions of SE are various and the concept of social entrepreneurship that was created thanks to Drayton can be understood very differently (Piecuch, 2014). Mair and Noboa separate the available academic definitions into the following groups:

- definitions in which the emphasis is put on the importance of non-profit organizations within which entrepreneurial activities directed at creating social values are implemented,

- definitions in which SE is reduced to socially responsible practices introduced by enterprises, e.g. to improve their own image in the environment,
- definitions emphasizing the fact that social entrepreneurship is a means of alleviating social problems and catalysing social change (Mair & Noboa, 2006)

Another possibility, according to Dees and Anderson, is to divide the definitions according to *‘two main schools of thought on the essential nature of “social entrepreneurship”’*. The first is the *‘Social Enterprise School of Thought that focuses on the generation of “earned-income” to serve a social mission.* The second *‘can be called Social Innovation School of Thought and it focuses on establishing new and better ways to address social problems or meet social needs’*(Dees & Anderson, 2006). As it has been demonstrated, there is no unique definition of SE and at the same time no unique way of approaching it exists.

In the recent years, some researchers took it upon themselves to conduct bibliometric analysis of the existing literature and map their research (e.g. (Hota, Subramanian, & Narayanamurthy, 2019); (Saebi, Foss, & Linder, 2019); (Aliaga-Isla & Huybrechts, 2018); (Macke, Sarate, Domeneghini, & Silva, 2018); (Conway Dato-on & Kalakay, 2016)). Some interesting findings emerged.

Hota, Subramanian & Narayanamurthy conducted a bibliometric analysis of all research on SE published between 1996 and 2017. In total 1296 papers were analysed, containing 74 237 cited references. The authors were able to identify: *“nine distinct clusters of social entrepreneurship research that depict the intellectual structure of the field”*(Hota et al., 2019). Furthermore, they were able to present the evolution of research on SE that is presented below. The observed period can be divided into 2 phases: 1996-2005 “emergence phase”, during which less than 6 works were published per year and from the beginning of 2006- onwards, during which the interest in social entrepreneurship among scholars started to grow. It is also important to notice that around 2010, the concept of hybridity started gaining on importance. The last column captures also the directions/opportunities for future research. The analysis showed that there are not many papers yet discussing ethics but that it will be considered a crucial aspect in SE research in the near future. Moreover, the authors were able to provide scientific evidence to support the claim that social entrepreneurship as a field is still emerging (Hota et al., 2019).

Figure 4- Evolution of social entrepreneurship field

Time Scale	Before 2006	2006 Onwards	2010 Onwards	After 2017
Focus Area	Social entrepreneur Social entrepreneurship	Social enterprise Social entrepreneurship	Hybrid social enterprise Social entrepreneurship	Ethical social enterprise Hybrid social enterprise
Key Developments	Emergence of social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneur	- Theoretical conceptualization of social entrepreneurship - Differentiation of social entrepreneurship construct from commercial entrepreneurship - Linkage of social entrepreneurship construct to not-for-profit and community entrepreneurship - Theoretical conceptualization of social enterprise	- Examination of hybridity challenges and solutions of social enterprise - Critical review of literature on social entrepreneurship	Future area of development - Understanding the ethical aspects of social enterprise - Subscribing to quantitative research - Adoption of organizational theories beyond institutional theory
Key Outcomes	- Definitions of social entrepreneurship - Characteristics of social entrepreneur	- Establishment of social entrepreneurship construct - Identifying unique characteristics of social entrepreneurship - Defining characteristics of social enterprise - Identifying typologies of social enterprises	- Understanding of challenges related to hybrid social enterprise - Exploration of how hybrid social enterprise can overcome different challenges	Expected outcomes - Integration of ethics in social enterprise - Criteria for performance measurement of ethical social enterprise - Strengthening the theoretical foundations of social entrepreneurship

Source: Hota, P. K., Subramanian, B., & Narayanamurthy, G. (2019). Mapping the Intellectual Structure of Social Entrepreneurship Research: A Citation/Co-citation Analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, p.19

Aliaga-Isla and Huybrechts conducted a memetic analysis and a systematic review in their study. The goal of their study was not to state a new definition (“push out”) but rather gather together all the available definitions to better understand them (“pull in”). They found 45 different definitions of social entrepreneurship from scholars based on the systematic review (Aliaga-Isla & Huybrechts, 2018). Below is the table that presents some of them.

Table 2: Chosen definitions of social entrepreneurship from the literature

Author(s)	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 »
Lasprogata G., Cotton M. (2003)	« Social entrepreneurship means non-profit organizations that apply entrepreneurial strategies to sustain themselves financially while having a greater impact on their social mission »
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 »
Austin J., Stevenson H., Wei-Skillern J.	« We define social entrepreneurship as innovative, social value creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, business, or government sectors »

(2006)	
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) »
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 »

Source: Aliaga-Isla, R., & Huybrechts, B. (2018). *From "Push Out" to "Pull In" Together: An Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship Definitions in the Academic Field*. *Journal of Cleaner Production*.

Macke et al. focused on gathering definitions from organizations dealing with SE that can be found below. It is an interesting approach and less often used in research.

Table 3: Definitions of social entrepreneurship coming from organizations

Source	Definition
Canadian Centre for Social Entrepreneurship (2001, p.1).	"The CCSE defines 'social entrepreneurship' broadly to encompass a variety of initiatives which fall into two broad categories. First, in the for-profit sector, social entrepreneurship encompasses activities emphasizing the importance of a socially engaged private sector, and the benefits that accrue to those who 'do well by doing good.' Second, it refers to activities encouraging more entrepreneurial approaches in the not-for-profit sector in order to increase organizational effectiveness and foster long-term sustainability".
School for Social Entrepreneurs (2015, p. 1)	"A social enterprise is a business driven by a social or environmental purpose. As with all businesses, social enterprises compete to deliver goods and services. The difference is that social purpose is at the very heart of what they do, and the profits they make are reinvested towards achieving that purpose. There is no template for social entrepreneurs; they employ a diverse range of approaches and are people of different ages, backgrounds, gender, interests, and expertise. What they share are entrepreneurial skills and allegiance to a social mission or purpose."
Ashoka (2015, p.1)	"Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change. (...) Social entrepreneurs present user-friendly, understandable, and ethical ideas that engage widespread support in order to maximize the number of citizens that will stand up, seize their idea, and implement it. Leading social entrepreneurs are mass recruiters of local change makers"
Institute for Social Entrepreneurship (ISE) (2015, p.3).	A Social Entrepreneur is a person who "applies his or her business expertise to create social value; and who provides smart solutions to community problems by thinking like an entrepreneur. Traditionally, entrepreneurs have trained their focus on products, services and profits". ISE believes that "entrepreneurs can do more - and are often expected to. Above and beyond business 'as usual,' they leverage their skills and resources to address serious needs, expand their impact and bolster the communities, neighbourhoods, schools and services in the places they do business"
Research Centre on Social Innovations Canada (2015)	Social innovations come from individuals, groups or organizations, and can take place in the for-profit, non-profit and public sectors. Increasingly, they are happening in the spaces between these three sectors as perspectives collide to spark new ways of thinking."
European Commission (2013, p. 17)	"The term social entrepreneurship is used to describe the behaviours and attitudes of individuals involved in creating new ventures for social purposes, including the willingness to take risks and find creative ways of using underused assets"

Source : Macke, J., Sarate, J. A. R., Domeneghini, J., & Silva, K. A. da. (2018). Where do we go from now? Research framework for social entrepreneurship. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 183, 677–685.

One more definition that is crucial to mention at this stage is a very comprehensive definition provided by Martin and Osberg.

“We define 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” (Martin & Osberg, 2007)

Whilst the above mentioned definition is quite precise, the social concept still remains unclarified. Saebi, Foss & Linder conducted an analysis of 395 articles on social entrepreneurship from top-tier academic journals. The authors concluded that: ‘(1) SE is still an unclear and contested concept that (2) relates to a multilevel and multistage phenomenon, which (3) has been scrutinized at different levels of analysis but (4) not in an explicit multilevel setting’. Furthermore, they have identified the existence of three major gaps: ‘key constructs remain unclear (i.e., the nature of SE, social value), lack of large-scale empirical data and research typically engages with only one level of analysis at a time’(Saebi et al., 2019).

“The concept of social entrepreneurship is still poorly defined and its boundaries to other fields of study remain fuzzy”(Mair & Martí, 2006). Taking all these definition into account, it can be seen that ‘whilst we may not have a “universal” definition of a social enterprise, we do have a number that are frequently cited and which capture the ethos of the relevant sector. They are broadly similar’(J. L. Thompson, 2008). It is true that looking at all the available definitions in the literature, some common points emerge from the definitions, especially the combination of entrepreneurship and social aspect. Nevertheless, the “social” is never clearly defined thus, the next section will concentrate on it.

2.4 Social aspect

The above conducted analysis of the definitions available in the literature demonstrates that there is no universal definition of social entrepreneurship. All scholars agree that SE is a combination of entrepreneurship and social dimension but the second aspect is very rarely analysed. Some argue that there is no need for it, as it is a well-recognised idea and some say that it is too hard, as social is an essentially contested concept. Nicholls and Cho describe it very well: *“Social organizations are ostensibly social because they advance specific social objectives, but this merely begs the questions of what social objectives include, what the nature and boundaries of society are, and how the answers to these questions are determined. (...) Hence, sociality – the extent to which an organization intentionally and effectively pursues the advancement of social objectives (however defined) is a critical, but problematic dimension for distinguishing socially entrepreneurial ventures from other organizations”* (Nicholls & Cho, 2006, p. 101). The lack of the definition of social might be problematic for various parties involved in SE, varying from people launching new initiatives to governments.

Albert Cho demonstrated that the existing definitions of social entrepreneurship are both tautological and monological and that it implicates a complicated relationship between politics and values and SE. Firstly, most of the available definitions are a simple repetition of the same idea and they clarify the “entrepreneurship” component but leave out the “social”. Secondly, definitions of SE tend to emphasize a monological approach (as opposed to dialogical). Lastly, in order for the distinction of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship to be meaningful, “social” aspect requires definition. The act of defining a domain requires *“exclusionary and ultimately political choices about which concerns can claim to be in society’s “true” interest”*. Therefore, social entrepreneurship is already a political phenomenon (Cho, 2006). Nevertheless, even if we take into account all of the above, there is still no clear answer what type of activities can be found under the “social” aspect.

Little can be found in the literature about the “social” but some researches tried to give at least a glimpse of activities that could be hiding behind the concept.

Praszkier and Nowak proposed a list of representative social topics: *“aging, chemical dependency, children with special needs, disabilities, discrimination against minorities, education, information and communication technologies (ICT) exclusion, energy production and distribution, environment, health, homelessness, peace and conflict resolution, poverty, rural community development, sanitation, street children, sustainable energy, trafficking in women and children, unemployment, women’s equality”*. The authors also mentioned that the

issues will be more applicable in some countries than in others and that over time some problems will become irrelevant while new ones will emerge (Praszkier & Nowak, 2011).

Further examples are: “local development, provision of public services, initiatives in the field of socio-occupational reintegration for groups affected by social exclusion (people able to work but professionally inactive), social services (e.g. care for the elderly, pre-school education for children, tourism, household services) and local development (e.g. agritourism, social revitalization, waste utilization) (Pacut, 2010).

Researches acknowledge that the “social” aspect lacks definition which is crucial in the analysis of social entrepreneurship and that finding it should be one of the main tasks for the future research. Until now, only ways of approaching the idea and examples what should be considered as social activities can be found in the literature. The question that arises when it comes to the “social aspect” is, if there is a cosmopolitan perspective that could be used or if what is good in a global perspective may not be politically feasible or desirable from a regional or national perspective? (Cho, 2006)

2.5 Social entrepreneurship on different continents

The ultimate objectives of social entrepreneurship are similar among different world regions, yet vast differences remain when it comes to the conceptualization. The discrepancies can be seen, but are not limited to, in aspects such as: definitions, historical factors, advertising and shaping SE, legal environment, institutional environment or problems and challenges. Until now, little research has been conducted on the similarities and differences between international conceptions of social entrepreneurship (Kerlin, 2006). According to Defourny and Nyssens: “*the distinctive conceptions of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship are deeply rooted in the social, economic, political and cultural context in which these organizations emerge*”. This has major implications when it comes to understanding of social entrepreneurship, which will require researches to take into account national specificities (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

2.5.1 United States

The economic downturn in 1970s and 1980s has had big influence on the sector of social entrepreneurship in the United States. During that time federal funding was largely cut back, which resulted in severe financing problems that non-profits were facing (Hoogendoorn, Pennings, & Thurik, 2010). In order to overcome the financing problems and assure the continuity of their activities, non-profits have introduced commercial activity into their

portfolio. Social enterprise was the term that was used to describe those activities. This background explains why revenue-generating activities, in the American context, are emphasised (Kerlin, 2006). Within this approach, *“social entrepreneurship refers above all to market-oriented economic activities that serve a social goal irrespective of the legal structure and sector”* (Nyssens, 2006 in Hoogendoorn et al., 2010).

2.5.2 Europe

European social enterprises emerged in 1980s, similarly to the American ones, due to the crises. The European approach is strictly linked to the third sector (the social economy) and addresses gaps and offers services that are not covered by the market or the government (Hoogendoorn et al., 2010). Within this approach, social enterprises are *“generally of the non-profit or cooperative type, are dedicated to the creation of social impact for the community, and combine revenue generation with the work or participatory activity of program beneficiaries”* (Nyssens, 2006). Although considerable national differences can be found across Europe in terms of welfare states, services provided by social enterprises and legal structure, two main approaches can be distinguished: the EMES and the UK approach (Hoogendoorn et al., 2010).

2.5.3 South East Asia

A study conducted by British Council states, that *“There is no specific legal and regulatory framework available for the social enterprises in Indonesia, making choosing the appropriate legal entity difficult”*.

Other than the above-mentioned challenge, there seems to be a common and acceptable practice for small and medium enterprises to operate without a legal entity, which is essentially due to the perceived complexity of registration and not seeing the benefits for having one. This leads to a very limited access to funding, e.g. grants, bank loans or other types, which existence most of the social entrepreneurs in Indonesia are not even aware of (British Council & UNESCAP, 2018).

What follows, is that the number of legally registered social enterprises does not represent the actual number of enterprises operating under the label of social entrepreneurship in Indonesia. This leads further on to a minor misconception, stating that social entrepreneurship is thus not popular in Indonesia and by extension in the South-East Asian countries.

An observation, that has been proven by (Doherty, Haugh, & Lyon, 2014) where 129 articles have been reviewed from around the world and only 16,2% of them has originated in countries other than those from Europe and North America. This implies a yet small number

of researches conducted in APAC countries. However, the exploration of social entrepreneurship is emerging and necessary due to an increasing need for “researchers to generate and test context-specific conceptual framework” (Sengupta & Sahay, 2017).

Lastly, it is important to notice that comparing to Europe and the United States, the literature about social entrepreneurship in South East Asia is negligible. Still, the reason for this might be that there is not much researches described in English and the author was unable to conduct a research in any of the local languages. This might be the second reason explaining the low number of research papers taken into account by the international academic community coming from APAC countries.

3. Research question

During the conducted literature review, the main concepts that are often mistaken with social entrepreneurship have been clarified. Furthermore, various definitions of the concept were presented and some possible approaches of analysing them were described. It gave a clearer overview of the term but as it was expected, no unique definition of SE was found. The reason for that, is the fact that social entrepreneurship is an essentially contested concept (Choi & Majumdar, 2014). In spite of that, some similarities between the definitions were noticed, as the definitions of social entrepreneurship are tautological and monological (Cho, 2006). At this point, the author realised that there seems to be no universal definition of social entrepreneurship, just yet.

Academics agree that the simplest and most logical way of analysing social entrepreneurship is by taking into account the “entrepreneurial” and “social” aspects of the definition. It has been still noticed, that the first aspect was well defined, contrary to the second one that has been often neglected by the researchers. This is very surprising, as it is the social dimension that distinguishes SE from commercial entrepreneurship and is the main reason for its existence. Therefore, the task of defining the “social” became even more crucial and at the same time more complicated.

Moreover, based on the authors personal experience and the literature review, a question about different factors that are potentially influencing the definitions, started to emerge. Is it possible to state that politics, geographical scope or social background have an impact on the field of social entrepreneurship, as well as on the available definitions, and could hence explain the multitude and discrepancies noticed between them?

Taking into account all of the above mentioned aspects that emerged during writing of the theoretical part of this paper, the final research question has been structured as followed: “How is the ‘social’ in social entrepreneurship defined in practice across Europe and South East Asia?”. The answer to this question will be based on a comparison between Poland and Belgium, as well as Indonesia and Timor Leste. The objective of this study is to receive actual responses from social entrepreneurs in the field, who have experience in this domain.

4. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to see, whether the concept of social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurs and the problems tackled by them differ across the globe. Moreover, the attitude of social entrepreneurs towards the idea of limited profit redistribution will be analysed, in order to possibly determine if the “European” or the “American” approach is more appropriate and acceptable. The section below will explain the methodology of this research.

4.1 Research type

4.1.1 Qualitative vs. Quantitative approach

There exist 2 approaches when it comes to the research techniques : qualitative and quantitative. According to Taylor “*quantitative research tests theories whereas qualitative research develops theories.. Qualitative procedures generally include personality variables such as, attitudes, feelings and emotions as opposed to the quantitative research*”(Taylor, 2005). Already essentially based on this definition, it was clear that there was only one appropriate choice of paradigm. Whilst, there is a very complex guide available to follow, the choice has been made based on the main differences between the two methods involving (in favour of qualitative):

- Complexity of experience, lack of numerical data
- In depth person-to-person interviews in order to analyse problems and experiences
- Strive to obtain reach in value, subjective and personal data
- Development of values and judgment

Due to the lack of clear experiment conditions in this framework, the qualitative research approach becomes more subjective than the quantitative one (Taylor, 2005) and so favours the process of understanding, of the previously mentioned personal factors, leading to an attempt at defining an idea or a concept.

Based on the fact, that qualitative researchers do not seek an objective appraisal, their implemented methods differ from the quantitative ones and include e.g. participant observation, focus groups, discourse analysis, unstructured/ semi-structured interviews and case studies (Katsirikou & Skiadas, 2009).

All of the above factors taken into account, the choice has been made to use the qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse data for this particular case, as it answered to the objectives of this practical part.

4.1.2 Case study vs. survey

In this paper, the research method based on case study analysis was adopted. “Building theory from case studies is a research strategy that involves using one or more cases to create theoretical constructs, proposition and/or midrange theory from case-based, empirical evidence”. Case studies can implicate either single or multiple cases and they typically involve data collection methods like observations, interviews and archives (Eisenhardt, 1989). During the literature review no clear definition of the social aspect was found whilst it is one of the most important phenomenon in SE. In such a situation the choice of a case studies research strategy rather than survey research, seemed like an appropriate choice (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

4.2 Collecting data

The right choices when it comes to data collection is crucial in order to obtain reliable results.

4.2.1 Sampling

Ten interviews with social entrepreneurs were conducted in the frame of this research. The approach of analysing Southeast Asia and Europe was chosen, in order to verify the idea if social entrepreneurship differs between developed and developing countries. This choice was also linked to the fact that the author was doing an internship in Indonesia and even though she studies in Belgium, she is Polish. Thus, entrepreneurs from those 2 European countries were contacted. Furthermore, the choice was also made in regards to avoidance of possible language barriers. As for the choice of respondents in Indonesia and East Timor, a particular challenge emerged linked to a very low knowledge of English of social entrepreneurs. Amongst all of the possible contacts in these countries, these 4 social entrepreneurs were chosen for their social activities and generated impact, additionally to having a clear advantage of a communicational English level.

The principal of diversity was also applied during the research of potential social entrepreneurs. The author tried to varied the interviewers when it comes to the location, gender, age but also different projects and legal entities.

Most of the social entrepreneurs that agreed to an interview are Ashoka fellows. It is not by coincidence, as the author hoped that they will have a better knowledge of social entrepreneurship than others. Nevertheless, in order to stay diversified some of the social entrepreneurs that were interviewed are not members of this organization.

The above choices were made, in the hope of obtaining diversified but reliable results.

4.2.2 Interviews description

When it comes to the types of interviews there is one common typology that separates interviews into 3 categories based on their level of formality and structure. They are categorised as follows:

- Structured interviews are following a predetermined and standardised set of questions. Each question needs to be read out in the exact same way and the responses need to be recorded on a standardised schedule. The tone of the voice should be neutral to avoid indicating any bias. This type of interviews is usually used to collect quantifiable data.
- Semi- structured interview as well as the in-depth interviews are non-standardised. They are the ones used in a qualitative research. During a semi-structured interview a list of themes and questions will be prepared beforehand by the researcher for them to be covered during the interview. Still, they can vary from one interview to another. Some questions might be omitted, others if needed might be added and the order of the questions might be mixed as well.
- Unstructured or in-depth interviews are informal. They can be used in exploring a general area of interest. No list of questions is prepared in advance but a clear idea of the aspects that should be discussed remains. The interviewee is able to talk freely but at the same time it is harder to analyse (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

As the qualitative research approach was adapted in this paper and there was a need of discussion of concrete subjects, the semi-structure interview type was decided upon. A standardised set of question was prepared and accordingly to the conversation directions it was being slightly modified/adopted.

The interviews were made face to face or by phone as it allowed a bigger flexibility in the discussion, which played an important role in the research. They lasted between half an hour and one and a half hour. The language that was used to conduct them was either English or Polish.

4.2.3 Interview guide and transcripts

The interview was divided into 3 main parts. The introductory part consisted of the presentation of the interviewee and his/her background. The goal of the second part was to understand better the activities undertaken by the social entrepreneur and his/her organisation. The last and most important section was dedicated to the “social” in social entrepreneurship and combined various questions that were asked in an attempt to provide an answer to the research question.

The choice of the semi-structured interviews allowed to make small modifications according to the needs. In order for the conversation to run smoothly the order of the questions was often modified.

Appendix 1 contains the preliminary list of questions which were used during the interviews. The list was originally created in English and later on translated into Polish, which resulted in some small adaptations.

What concerns the transcripts, the author decides to transcribe the interviews very meticulously rather than summarizing the main points. Small nuances could change the sense of the whole idea. They are to be found in Appendix 2 either in English or Polish, depending on the social entrepreneur.

5. Analysis and results

The aim of this part is to present the information obtained via the 10 semi-structured interviews that have been conducted. First of all, the interviewees and their activities will be presented. Later on, their opinions will be presented on the given aspects. In order to present the data in a more comprehensive way, it has been separated according to the tackled issues as well as the continents. As it was mentioned previously, some of the interviews have been conducted in English and some in Polish. Therefore, for the first ones direct citations will be used whereas for the second ones a free translation of the author based on the transcripts, that can be found in Appendix 2.

5.1 The social entrepreneurs

The table below is a short summary of the data obtained from the first two parts of the interviews. Information such as: the name of the social entrepreneur, the name of its entity, the website, the country of operation, social activities, impact and ways of financing and profit distribution, can be found.

Table 4. Description of the social entrepreneurs and their activities

Name	Name of the entity	Website	Country	Social activities	Impact	Ways of financing and profit distribution
Barlian Juliantoro	Kapiler	Kapilerindonesia.com	Indonesia	Mapping of the status and of the needs of orphanages in Depok, enabling access to this information and finding donors through a platform and an application.	Between 5000 and 10000 children covered in Depok (East Jakarta) only.	A foundation, financing from private donations, of which 10% goes to the statutory activities.
Lili Nur Indah Sari	Simaggie	Simaggie.com	Indonesia	Empowering of the local catfish farmers in East by Java by providing affordable and sustainable maggot-based animal feed and organic waste retrieval.	Less than 50 farmers around entire Indonesia.	Own money, grants, funding from competitions. Profit covers statutory activities, except for the salary of employees.
Dr. Handojo Tjanrakusuma	Community Based Rehabilitation Development and Training Centre - Part of the Disabled Children Development Foundation	-	Indonesia	Maximizing the quality of life of disabled people in Indonesia and around the world, by creating community-based systems engaging multiple stakeholders at different levels.	Not able to estimate: training center for people who then go back and have an impact locally. An estimated 700 000 disabled people live within the reach of the center.	
Hilly Bouwman	Botir Matak	Botir Matak on Facebook	East Timor	Empowering people with disabilities by providing training, skills sets and a safe working environment. Recycling of glass bottles and sewing activity.	<i>Direct impact:</i> 5 women in the sewing workshop, 4 people in the glass workshop <i>Indirect impact:</i> not available	A company, which funding comes from: money from their other construction company, own money, one grant, and goes towards statutory activities.
Ida Karpińska	Fundacja Kwiat kobiecości	kwiatkobiecoci.pl	Poland	Providing sexual education and changing the vision on women's health, specifically gynecological cancer in Poland. Creating a preventive structure that engages various stakeholders on different levels.	2012: 30 000 women in the country 2019: Unknown, but much more	Foundation, financing from sponsorships, companies, private donations, 1% of taxes and EU projects. Goes towards statutory activities, incl. salaries of 5 people.
Marjan Gryson	Touché	vzwtouch.be	Belgium	Assuring successful ex-inmates reintegration in the society.	2015: 5 prisons, 100 prisoners/year	An NPO with a mixed economical model. Financing from partial

				Providing therapy programs, training workshops and events for re-channeling aggression and educating wider public about this issue.	2019: Unknown, but much more. Another target group of youngsters added.	government subsidies (max ¼ of the budget), paid workshops, sales of products, donations from companies and individuals. Goes towards statutory activities.
Maciej Podyma	Fundacja Łąka	laka.org.pl	Poland	Promoting the transformations of lawns into meadows in the cities/villages and next to major roads, by providing education for stakeholders and services i.e. help in creating the meadows.	Until now, 1.5 million m² of meadows planted, over 80 projects, 17 cities, 5000 participants in the workshops	A foundation, which financing comes mainly from services, i.e. creating meadows in cities and from selling seeds. All profit goes towards statutory activities.
Krzysztof Łagodziński	Fundacja Sławek	fundacja.slawek.org	Poland	Promoting and assuring social and professional inclusion of alcoholics, homeless, physically – and mentally disabled people, unemployed and single mothers. They provide assistance and support to people in prisons, shelters for minors and correctional facilities.	At least 10 000 people have received help during the 20 years of existence of the foundation. Approximately 500 to 1000 people are helped each year.	A foundation, which financing comes from private donations and company subsidies. Profit goes towards statutory activities.
Dr. Katarzyna Winkowska-Nowak	Fundacja ROSE	fundacja.arkes.pl/rose	Poland	Supporting and improving education and social activity in local communities, by equalizing opportunities and using innovative information technology, in particular mathematics.	<i>Direct impact:</i> training of 630 teachers /year <i>Indirect impact:</i> unknown, approximately 8000 students/year	A foundation, which financing comes from provided training, publications, sometimes a small grant and from the schools that support their work. Profit goes towards statutory activities, including one full-time position.
Aleksandra Chudaś	Fundacja Zwolnieni z teorii	zwolnienizteorii.pl	Poland	Improving education by promoting social project management amongst the youth and developing necessary soft skills, that result in an increased number of social projects in the country. They provide support, mentoring and training for participants, through the use of a centralized platform.	2000 projects finalized in 5 years of existence of the foundation, including individual cases/participants from outside of Poland	A foundation, which financing comes from partnerships with companies and rarely from governmental grants. The profit goes towards statutory activities.

5.2 The “social” in social entrepreneurship

5.2.1 Elements that make social entrepreneurs consider themselves as such

The following two questions were asked during the interview in order to have a better understanding what elements make that social entrepreneurs consider themselves as such or no: “Would you call yourself a social entrepreneur? Why? What elements make it that you (don’t) consider yourself as a social entrepreneur?” and “How did you get acquainted with the concept of social entrepreneurship?” Below the gathered data can be found.

5.2.1.1 Southeast Asia

When answering this question, some of the social entrepreneurs were linking it to the social aspect of their activities.

“ Maybe about 3 years ago I realized that when I want to make an initiative that makes other people sustained, then you are a social enterprise Why? Because I want the sustainable too. So, when I take about 10% of the donations, that’s part of the sustainable part for my company. I am a social entrepreneur because I introduce a positive change in the community, in an innovative way” (Juliantoro, Kapiler)

Even though the public considers them as social entrepreneurs, some of the interviewees were hesitant to call themselves that. Moreover, some admitted that they do not pay attention to the definitions.

“Actually, I still don’t know if I am a social entrepreneur. I am calling myself that for the sake of branding. If we see the definition of a social entrepreneur as of a person who can balance the impact that he can deliver and the profit that he can gain to sustain the project or the enterprise, than I didn’t reach this stage yet. So I don’t feel I deserve to call myself a social entrepreneur, not yet. For branding, of course I put myself as social entrepreneur” (Sari, Simaggie).

“To be honest I don't really have much contact with definitions and I do not pay a lot of attention to them. I think it is just to spread good” (Dr. Tjanrakusuma, CBR)

5.2.1.2 Europe

Similarly to Asia, in Europe some of the interviewees were also describing themselves through the scope of their activities.

“ Now I know that I am a social entrepreneur, not some association, not some foundation but a social entrepreneur who realizes his social goals, i.e. our society. We are already talking

about large social campaigns that reach 25 million Poles (...) I am already a very conscious social entrepreneur” (Karpińska, Kwiat Kobiecości).

“For different reasons. For me, this concept is a combination of several elements. A social entrepreneur is trying to really tackle and change social issues, but by setting up professional structures and organisations and economical model, that are different than the classical social organisation. Innovation is also a really important part of that. And for me, that is very much linked to being entrepreneurial. That’s it’s not only that you start something new, but you stay and keep on innovating” (Gryson, Touché).

“I don't know if I perceive myself as a social entrepreneur because in Poland such a perception of a social entrepreneur is immediately associated with social cooperatives or other places that employ excluded people, so I had to switch a bit my understanding. But if the main goal is the good of all, not profit than yes, I am a social entrepreneur” (Podyma, Łąka).

A very interesting aspect that emerged, is the fact that some of the social entrepreneurs were conducting their activities without realising that they are social entrepreneurs, until someone else did not make them aware of it.

“At least they recognized us as such. One day Mrs. Ewa from Ashoka called me and started telling me about this organization, they wanted me to join them as I was supposedly an social entrepreneur” (Karpińska, Kwiat Kobiecości).

“Not consciously. I think we already did some things and thought already in that direction. For instance, what I described before. We decided to set up an organisation that functions differently than the ones we already knew. And I think that was social entrepreneurship, but we did not call it that or we were not conscious of it and we were just trying to do something on our own. While the moment Ashoka contacted us, this thing changed in the sense that we became more conscious about what we were doing” (Gryson, Touché).

“We, from the very beginning, not even knowing the concept of social economy, registered our foundation in two fields: foundation and higher utility organization.(...) basically ASHOKA made us realize that what we do is social economy and that it is really a new trend in Poland, but it has been working great elsewhere in the world for years” (Łagodziński, Sławek).

5.2.2 Limited profit redistribution

During the literature review, two main categories of definitions emerged the “American” and “European” definition. As explained previously, the difference between them is the emphasis that is put on the limited profit redistribution in the European definition. The author wanted to see how social entrepreneurs approach this issue and if they consider that having no limited profit redistribution has a negative impact on the conducted activities. The social entrepreneurs were provided with the definition of social enterprises from the European perspective and were asked about their thoughts on it: “Do you think that the choice of the business model (social enterprise/NPO) has an impact on the conducted activity? Is it important? Does it play an important role when it comes to the definition of the concept?”

5.2.2.1 Southeast Asia

“In my personal opinion it doesn’t matter. In the 2nd year of running this company, we thought about how to make money or profit if we don’t have a project, because from the project we get the management fee. And from the management fee we can sustain and our impact will be sustained too. (...) I think that we can have profit and at the same time have a positive impact. There is no need for the limited profit redistribution in the definition. I think that according to the different goals that the company wants to achieve, they will either have profit redistribution or not” (Juliantoro, Kapiler).

“I think that in Indonesia there is also the idea of limited profit redistribution but not obligatory” (Sari, Simaggie).

It seems that in Indonesia social enterprises do not need to have a limited profit redistribution. Having profit is perceived as having a bigger capability of creating a positive impact.

5.2.2.2 Europe

It seems that the opinions on this concept are divided in Europe. Some of the social entrepreneurs did not think that the decision of limited profit redistribution would have a negative impact.

“For me, a non-profit organisation is not a condition. I think that you can have a full profit business that can also be a social entrepreneurial organisation. For me it is not directly linked. (...) I think you need to inform yourself and you need to choose the most suitable model, but it’s not through definition that an NGO is more impactful or that a profit organisation is more impactful” (Gryson, Touché).

“It seems to me that we must focus on profit, because only then we have funds for the Foundation activities, if we do not have profit we do not have funds for current operations”.

“I think that if we were a company we would have the same impact as a Foundation (...) Does it really matter if someone makes profit from it? In my opinion, the more important is the change it makes”(Chudaś, Zwolnnieni z Teorii).

Nevertheless, some did think the opposed thing, that social entrepreneurship should be established with limited profit redistribution.

“I honestly think that money is a knife with two edges: necessary but destructive” (Winkowska- Nowak, ROSE).

“It is crucial that people don't use this social entrepreneurship to do bad things. Foundations that launder money make very bad reviews of real organizations that actually want to help people. People who are social entrepreneurs should be more transparent and should have limited profit redistribution” (Karpńska, Kwiat Kobiecości).

One of the social entrepreneurs also stated an interesting fact concerning Poland, that could explain why most of the social entrepreneurs in Poland operate as a foundation and have a limited profit redistribution.

“ It also probably depends on the culture of the country. I think that the culture in Poland is very low when it comes to social activities. Instead of appreciating the fact that people devote their professional lives to the common good, they are sometimes accusing of money embezzlement. I think that in countries where this understanding of what social action is, is low, profit will be negatively perceived” (Chudaś, Zwolnnieni z Teorii).

5.2.3 “Social aspect”

Passing on to the crucial point of the research, social entrepreneurs where asked how they would describe the “social aspect”. If needed, follow-up questions such as: “What makes social entrepreneurship social?, What could be considered as the social value that social entrepreneurship creates?” were asked. At this point, the proposed definitions or way of defining will be simply stated without analysing them.

5.2.3.1 Southeast Asia

Below, the most interesting and important points emerging from the interviews with social entrepreneurs from Asia.

“The social part, especially in my company, is about developing people and developing a community. (...) When the people are empowered, so our goal is achieved and other aspects such as environment will be included”. (Juliantoro, Kapiler).

“Social is what makes social entrepreneurship. If there is a change that the enterprise can do, in terms of positive changes or positive impact that they can deliver to the society, that is the reason that makes the social entrepreneurship social. (...) In my opinion, environment should be included, as a holistic approach.” (Sari, Simaggie)

“General population in developing countries understand the social word as helping people. (...) Social work, in CBR, means for me developmental work. (...) It is also a process of empowerment.” (Tjanrakusuma, Community Based Rehabilitation Development and Training Centre)

“One way, you could say that social impact means that you are solving a community problem, but maybe that’s not enough. (...) The environment is a world-wide community problem and should be, in this moment, incorporated in any normal company” (Bouwman, Botir Matak)

Some common points, that will be analysed in the next chapter, emerge from this definition. Nevertheless, even after asking for as much precision as possible, those definitions remain vague.

5.2.3.2 Europe

“It is work for people. Doing something for another person.” (Karpińska, Kwiat Kobiecości)

“Social means everything that adds value into the well-being of people, relationships and the planet. (...) It’s the reason why we exist. We wouldn’t exist if there wouldn’t be a social problem we want to fix.” (Gryson, Touché)

“Social entrepreneurship is essentially supposed to solve issues. And the best way of solving issues is by being self-sufficient.” (Podyma, Łąka)

“For me social means social. These are excluded people, with who we work and whom our work helps getting back to society, directly by employing them in our enterprises and indirectly, by generating profit that will be redistributed for additional help.” (Łagodziński, Sławek)

“The social aspect is someone, like an entrepreneur, who can join the fight in order to solve it, so for needs of the society.” (Winkowska-Nowak, ROSE)

“In my opinion it is the basic for strategic decisions in the company, not focused on gaining profit and thus the respective actions leading to it. For us, social covers everything that you do for someone else other than you.” (Chudaś, Zwolnieni z teorii)

The common points emerging from these interviews tend to show a deeper and more complex understanding of this idea, which will be later presented in the discussion.

5.2.4 Differences between countries

At last, it seemed only logical to ask for the perception of differences between the countries in terms of social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship and social problems to tackle. Various questions e.g. “Do you personally think that social entrepreneurship has a different meaning varying from country to country? If yes what similarities and differences do you perceive? Are the social problems tackled by social entrepreneurs different?” were asked in order to gain a broader perspective on these challenges.

5.2.4.1 Southeast Asia

The following citations resume the major outlines of the ideas stated by the social entrepreneurs.

“I think it’s a very similar movement, but I agree that every country has their different problems to face so you have to adapt.” (Juliantoro, Kapiler)

“I think there are some quite significant differences between the countries and the definitions. (...) By nature we are forced to think of a solution to a particular problem. In USA, where people are settled and live in prosperity, social entrepreneurship is less popular.” (Sari, Simaggie)

“I think that social entrepreneurship differs from country to country. (...) The condition of the community and the culture of people in different countries is different. (...) The financial and the political situation of a community also plays a role.” (Tjanrakupuma, Community Based Rehabilitation Development and Training Centre)

“I think that there are a lot of similarities. The ones that I know are always about people and people not being included. Still it’s amazing how the topics are similar. It’s about inclusion. It’s about the environment. We all live in the same world. (...) One of the reasons is maybe the development level.” (Bouwman, Botir Matak)

5.2.4.2 Europe

As for the European entrepreneurs, the following thought outline some major ideas on the subject of differences and similarities between the countries.

“They are absolutely similar, even though there is quite a difference between the countries in terms of basic needs, problems to tackle and actions to take. (...) I think, that the social entrepreneurs are similar in terms of common personality traits. You need to want to help another person and sacrifice your time and energy for another person.” (Karpińska, Kwiat Kobiecości)

“I don’t think that the meaning of social entrepreneurship is fundamentally different. It all comes back to the idea of how can we, as an individual, and in relationship to the people around, live in a non-harmful and a happy way and how can we take care of each other and of the environment to make it possible. (...) Of course, there is a difference in priorities or in the already set-up order, but the tackled problems are essentially the same.” (Gryson, Touché)

“I have observed big differences related mainly to the way of financing the entrepreneurships between the countries. (..) Everything depends on the country; the problems are quite different.” (Podyma, Łąka)

“The differences that I can see are related to the level of social engagement in such projects I the West, which is much bigger. The society is much more developed and engaged in such things. Here, the social entrepreneurship is lesser known.” (Łagodziński, Sławek)

“Some issues, like mine, are quite universal and present in the majority of the countries in the world, but are solved differently. (...) I think, that a certain type of a person, or especially a certain type of solving a issue, fits to one country but not to another.” (Winkowska-Nowak, ROSE)

“The concept defining a social entrepreneurship can be fully well universal, but the application field is local. (...) Every country has its own specificity, and what is great is that the social entrepreneurs know the specificity of the local problem and can have a bigger impact.” (Chudaś, Zwolnieni z teorii)

6. Discussion

In this final chapter the most relevant findings that emerged from the conducted qualitative research will be presented and analysed. They will put into perspective the previously conducted academic literature review with the respective theoretical explanation of the

concept of social entrepreneurship, and compare it to the practical knowledge and understanding of this concept by social entrepreneurs around the world. In the end, who better to ask for experience and thoughts on this idea if not the actual players in this field.

The quantitative research was based on 10 semi-structured interviews conducted with social entrepreneurs (3 from Indonesia, 1 from East Timor, 1 from Belgium and 5 from Poland). First of all, information about the social entrepreneurs and their activities was gathered. Looking at the backgrounds of the social entrepreneurs that the interviews were conducted with, it is visible that there is no single path to become an entrepreneur. Some like Ms Lili Nur Indah Sari, know right from the beginning that they would like to be social entrepreneurs and create their own social enterprise but some like Ms Ida Karpińska, where never expecting to become one. It was simply “life that caused it but I would not go back because this is what made me a happy and fulfilled person” (Karpińska, Kwiat Kobiecości).

The same applies to the activities that they undertake. They can range from “Maximizing the quality of life of disabled people in Indonesia and around the world, by creating community-based systems engaging multiple stakeholders at different levels” (Dr. Tjanrakusuma) to “Promoting the transformations of lawns into meadows in the cities/villages and next to major roads, by providing education for stakeholders and services i.e. help in creating the meadows. The goal is to increase biodiversity” (Podyma, Łąka). The whole spectrum of the analysed activities has been presented at the beginning of this practical part.

The literature considers social entrepreneurship to have a more local impact than a global one. It is true that some social entrepreneurship initiatives are very local (e.g. Botir Matak in East Timore) but in contrast some can have national impacts (e.g. Foundation Kwiat Kobiecości, Foundation Zwolnieni z Teorii”).

During the interviews, due to the different legal approaches between the countries, the topic of financing was raised as well. It has been noticed that when it comes to the legal status in Poland, almost all social entrepreneurs are registered as a Foundation. Unfortunately, social enterprise does not exist as such and a Foundation allows to operate in many aspects as a normal company but have access to special funding. Nevertheless, the profit needs to go to the statutory activities. Another interesting point that emerged from the interview is the fact that in Poland, a special possibility of financing exists. A very common initiative among Poles is the transfer of 1% of income tax to a chosen public benefit organisation. To the authors knowledge this is a unique initiative. It seems that it recompensates for the lack of government support that is, to some extent, provided in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Social entrepreneurs consider themselves as such, through the scope of their activities. When describing, the emphasis was put on the conducted activities and the interest in social goal rather than economic profit. Apart from that, no elements were found that could be used as a universal approach to classify someone as a social entrepreneur.

As it was mentioned previously, another interesting observation was that some of the interviewees were unaware of the fact that they are social entrepreneurs, before someone else pointed it out to them. Often Ashoka played a major role in it. The social entrepreneurs often emphasized that they were doing what they thought is right in the most appropriate way but never really realised that it is called social entrepreneurship.

It was expected to obtain quite homogeneous views on social entrepreneurship in the same country, due to the institutionalization of SE, cultural norms, etc., but it appears that such a definition is also far from being homogenous. Possibly, because of the amount of the available definitions. An idea emerged that instead of creating a global definition, at least at the beginning, it would be better to focus the research on finding a local universal definition as well as local solutions. *“The problem that social entrepreneurship wants to solve is here, in developing country, but the concept comes from the developed country. So there is a gap between the solution and the problem. So we shouldn’t use the solution coming from that developed country because it’s not relevant with our condition”* (Sari, Simaggie).

When it comes down to the opinion on the limited profit redistribution aspect and a choice between the “European” and “American” definition of social enterprise, in Europe no consensus has been found. It seems that the opinion was linked to the social background of the social entrepreneur and the dependence on funding rather than being sustainable via an provided service or product. The sample is not vast but it seems that in Southeast Asia, there is no obligation for an limited profit redistribution. Balancing the social and economic goals is the mission of a social enterprise and only by succeeding in the sustainability part, the enterprise will be able to have a stable, positive social impact.

The definition of “social” according to social entrepreneurs were various, so it might be a prove of the fact that social, similarly to social entrepreneurship, is an essentially contested subject (Choi & Majumdar, 2014). This is one of the possible reasons. The other possibility is simply the fact that social entrepreneurs are more concerned about their actions than definitions. Still some common points stood out. In the definitions of entrepreneurs from Southeast Asia the idea of influencing a community stands out as opposed to the

empowerment of an individual in Europe. This might be directly linked to the fact that Indonesia is an Islamic country, where helping out the community is somehow inherited.

Based on the statements gathered from the practitioners, the following definition of “social” in social entrepreneurship unfolds:

“The “social aspect” in social entrepreneurship is fundamentally related to the definition of the word social, i.e. to people as individuals or in a community. The main focus is on solving of a initially identified, particular problem. The direct consequence would be the improvement of the quality of life, all while socially and professionally engaging and empowering local communities or individuals. A secondary, nonetheless less significant objective, is to proceed in a non-harmful way and in respect of others and of the environment. The “environmental aspect” is closely related to the social, since it impacts the quality of life of everyone. Nowadays, it seems even more crucial, as our planet is suffering of global warming and pollution problematic. As such, it should not be considered as a separate aspect, but rather as an intrinsic factor of the social aspect”.

Lastly, the theory of the differences between the developing and developed countries was tested. When it comes down to the social entrepreneurs, they do not differ between countries. There is a need for having a specific mindset: not everyone is willing to sacrifice time in order to help others. All social entrepreneurs are people that have the social value rather than the profit, at heart.

When it comes to the problems tackled by social entrepreneurs, similarities as well as differences emerge. It seems that they are some universal problems that social entrepreneurs face around the world but at the same time bigger social inequalities preserve in developing countries such as Southeast Asia, therefore these countries face some more specific problems that do not occur in the developed countries.

Even when it comes to universal problems, tackling them across different countries is not easy. The motivation might be similar but the approach needs to differ. As the example of Dr. Nowak showed, even though a problem is universal, there is no unique way of approach it. One solution might work in one country but it might be completely unsuccessful in another. It proves the theory found in the literature: *global perspective may not be politically feasible or desirable from a regional or national perspective?* (Cho, 2006).

This research demonstrated that in the literature there is a clear need for a universal definition of social in SE, especially from the legal point of view there is a need for further research in

this field. But analysing the stories of the contacted social entrepreneurs we can see that they do not pay that much attention to the definitions. As they somehow forget the definition, there is no need for a choice of an universal definition. They want to solve a given social problem, in an innovative way with the means that they have at hand, so as such it is not very important for them. It seems that the practitioners don't really bother about creating a common understanding of what they are/do and are rather focusing on their actions.

7. Limitations

As it was mentioned before, the sampled data originated from a limited number of sources: 5 for each Europe and Asia, which represent 4 major and different fields of focus for social entrepreneurship: environment, education, health and reintegration of excluded individuals into the society. As a direct conclusion, the analysis is also partially limited and subjective. Nevertheless, the provided inputs have been assessed as sufficient for the purpose of this thesis.

The provided work managed to clearly define the concepts that are often mistaken with SE and reassemble various definitions available in the literature. Based on the analysis we were able to propose a definition of the social aspect, and realize that social entrepreneurs do not care that much about the definitions. Therefore, this elaborated definition which is partially based on their input, might present not only a limited, but also a underdeveloped point of view and aspect of social entrepreneurship.

For future research, it might be interesting to proceed by gathering opinions about a given definition e.g. of social aspect, by using a survey. Ashoka stated, that they are 3600 fellows in 92 countries. 546 in Europe, 302 in North America, 1020 in Asia. Implementing a survey would lead to a much greater, and possibly more precise, number of opinions. Additionally, an interesting problem to analyse would be the much higher number of social entrepreneurs in Asia, compared to Europe or North America. Is this linked to the numerous difficulties that Asia faces or to another, yet to be discovered factor?

It is important to mention that this work has its limitations. Even though the author tried to use as much and as various literature as it was feasible, it is impossible to mention each and every of the available sources. At the same time, those sources are not exhaustive. The aim of this thesis is to define the meaning of "social" in social entrepreneurship. Some information about the topic has been therefore in general omitted. Moreover, the number of conducted interviews allowed to come up with a statistically valid results, yet, it would be interesting to expand this research even further in the near future.

The attempt at doing the research in South East Asia was chosen, because the author did her internship there and an interesting opportunity for analysis thus emerged. Nevertheless, the research uncovered the lack of English knowledge in Indonesia. Therefore, some of the well-established local entrepreneurs had to be unfortunately discarded due to the impossibility of communication.

Another limitation of this work is connected to the SE themselves and taking up contact with them. The conducted research has unfolded a challenge, that has indirectly influenced the number of information sources available. In fact, the SE were not easy to contact and finding an appropriate contact on internet seemed sometime and lost case.

Conclusion

Initially, an extensive literature review has been carried out, leading to outlining an issue in the academic research which has become the core problematic of this master thesis. The aim of this work was to define, based on literature review and semi-structured interviews, the definition of the word “social” in the concept of social entrepreneurship. The practical assessment of this subject has been carried out with help of a qualitative method based on a case study.

Social entrepreneurship is fundamentally about empowering a community or an individual, by providing necessary support, training and resources and leading to resolving an initially identified local problematic, all while respecting the society and the environment.

The profiles, characters and capabilities of the social entrepreneurs in Europe and in southeast Asia are essentially the same. In terms of the tackled problematic, there are some universal issues present all around the world, as for instance the exclusion of physically and mentally disabled individuals or the environmental pollution. However, there is a number of problems that applies to a specific location with potentially specific community, which highlights the importance of having local player in the field, who understand the specificities of the issue.

As for the social entrepreneurship, the perception of the concept and of the actions differs not only from continent to continent, but in some cases from one country to another within the same continent. There is still a lack of knowledge on the subject of social entrepreneurship, leading sometimes to misconceptions or biased perception of the social entrepreneurs, that nevertheless improves with the passing time.

This research has not only led to a deeper understanding of the concept of the social entrepreneurship itself, but more importantly, to a clear framework of the social aspect within it. This work constitutes a framework for future research in the field of social entrepreneurship.

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