

If not for profit,  
for what and how?

S O C I A L  
E N T E R P R I S E

# Social Entrepreneurship Competencies of the Students at University of Barcelona

Virginia FERRER & Olga CABRERA  
Didactic and Educational Organization Department (DOE)  
Faculty of Pedagogy - University of Barcelona

*EMES-SOCENT Conference Selected Papers, no. LG13-06*

4<sup>th</sup> EMES International Research Conference on Social Enterprise - Liege, 2013

Interuniversity Attraction Pole (IAP)  
on Social Enterprise (SOCENT) 2012-2017

and



 **EMES network**



## Abstract

The current economic model has failed and in response increasingly Governments would have to look for a more sustainable model, both socially and environmentally balanced. New challenges and organizations are appearing under non classical conception of doing business, dealing with not only economic activity, they had an intense social activity, and the University must meet its responsibility in these new opportunities. In this action line is University of Barcelona doing changes, trying to improve: Impact of training, skills of students and teachers, transversal competences at UB, transition to college, relationship between the university and the workplace, gender in university teaching, and so on. Through this research study we tried to find response at different questions as: What are the meanings of the concepts and practices of national and international social entrepreneurship in the University of Barcelona at social sciences and in particular degrees in Social Education, Social Work and Education Studies? What are the skills needed by students of social sciences and especially in Social Education, Social Work and Education Work for the transfer of social knowledge and social entrepreneurship? What is the perception of students and lecturers of Social Education, Education Work and Social Work on social entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer? As sensitize teachers to develop academic activities in this regard? Methodology followed was a survey or questionnaire about the subject of study, has been well received by students who participated in the validation of this instrument. Many of these students know all or part of the concept of social entrepreneurship, while some of them say that it is an issue that they discuss in any of the classes of the grades. Concern to the future of the economy, unemployment and difficulties in joining the labor market for graduates in Social Education, Education Work and Social Work, makes these students consulted during the validation, expressing their interest to a University that provides training and tools to acquire skills that will help them in the future to undertake their own projects.

**This Communication has been done with the support:**



**Didactic and Educational Organization** Department (DOE)-Faculty of Pedagogy (University of Barcelona).



FECYT (Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología). Proyecto RUES con ref. FCT-11-2511. *Red Universitaria de Emprendeduría Social a nivel del Estado Español*. Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The current economic model has failed and in response increasingly Governments would have to look for a more sustainable model, both socially and environmentally balanced. We see this with the approval of the Law on Sustainable Economy in March 16th, 2011. We also find that the business world also wants to contribute, in some cases, to improve the conditions of social and environmental impacts of their business through Social Corporate Responsibility. Recently the Government of Catalonia, presented the '*Social Entrepreneurship support Program*', being the 1st support program in this sector in our country promoted by an administration. This program aims to identify social entrepreneurs and initiatives (Zhara et al., 2009; Pelegrí, X., 2004), and the creation of an ecosystem to consolidate their projects and the dissemination of good practice. The third sector is also setting as an alternative, although not the only answer, but as a further means to respond to the follies of society, within a complex live system, where different options can coexist. It is in this area which seems to be located to the social entrepreneur and social entrepreneurship possible response to social demands. Isabel Vidal (2010) gives us a vision from the economy and notes that although economic theory identifies the company as a tool for maximizing the financial returns of the capital invested there are "other companies", identified early twentieth under the name of Social Economy Brock, (Debbi D., 2009; Drayton, B., 2002; Goldstein, Jeffrey A. Hazy, James, Silberstang, Joyce, 2009). With these companies we find consumer cooperatives, agricultural workers, firms producing economic benefit while social benefits, nonprofits, philanthropic associations, etc. According to this author these socioeconomic initiatives main aim is to increase the welfare of each its members, then we would be talking of mutual aid. These organizations are dealing with not only economic activity but had an intense social activity, and the University must meet its responsibility in these new challenges. In this action line is University of Barcelona doing changes, trying to improve: Impact of training, skills of students and teachers, transversal competences at UB, transition to college, relationship between the university and the workplace, gender in university teaching, and so on. It's clear that business regional environment is changing and our University is doing efforts and want to be present supporting those initiatives.

## 2. HISTORY OF A TRADITIONAL ORGANIZATION

University of Barcelona has an old history in teaching and research, is a public institution of higher education in Catalonia, catering to the needs of the greatest number of students and delivering the broadest and most comprehensive offering in higher educational courses. The UB is also the principal centre of university research in Spain and has become a European benchmark for research activity, both in terms of the number of research programmes it conducts and the excellence these have achieved.

Over the past 150 years, the education revolution has transformed postindustrial society into what can be called the schooled society. Along with a few other major phenomena, such as global capitalism and democracy, schooling whole populations for ever more years to complete a widening array of educational degrees has changed both the individuals and the institutions that make up the core of society. While the education revolution has significant material and political consequences, it is primarily a cultural phenomenon. Its own history is closely tied to the history of Barcelona and of Catalonia, the university combines the values of tradition with its position as an institution dedicated to innovation and teaching excellence: a university that is as outward-looking and cosmopolitan as the city from which it takes its name.

This widespread education in postindustrial society creates new cultural ideas about types of knowledge, models of expertise, definitions of personal success and failure, conceptions of work and workplaces, measurements of intelligence and human talent, and so forth. At the same time, educational achievement and degree attainment have come to dominate processes of social stratification and social mobility, replacing and delegitimizing traditional forms of status attainment.

With such an extensive global impact on postindustrial society, mass education is the foundation of a social revolution of modernity (Brock, Debbi D., 2009).

Now the challenge is how to introduce social entrepreneurship and Social innovation embracing new strategies (Mair, J. & Ganly, K., 2009; Gunn, R & Durkin, C., 2010), concepts and ideas and new ways of organizing that meet individual and societal needs e.g., health, education and poverty, equality and inclusion, and that extend and strengthen civil society (Leadbeater, 1997, 2007; Westall, 2007). Social innovation is restorative, inclusive, transformative and provocative to give explanation to the complexity context (Ferrer, V.; Rimbau, C. i Ventura, J., 2011; Ferrer, V.; Cabrera, O ; Alaiz, E., 2011).

Everywhere there is a growing interest in social entrepreneurship, social enterprises and social innovation. Traditional welfare systems are transforming and new global challenges induce us to think different. Social entrepreneurs create innovative solutions to societal problems (Brock, Debbi D. & Ashoka, 2008), often across sectors and professional disciplines. This implies, however, knowledge on leadership, organizing and management as well as in-depth training in social innovation processes and entrepreneurship.

University of Barcelona has a strong research profile in social science disciplines but social innovation and is now launching and introducing their learnings interdisciplinary in the courses.

### 3. BUILDING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FRAMEWORK

Social Enterprise and Social Entrepreneurship have been defined with different shades due to diverse academic backgrounds, geographic locations, and the economic developmental context of the countries (Defourny and Nyssens, 2006; Kerlin, 2009). Therefore, there is still debate among practitioners and academics over the exact definitions of Social Entrepreneurship (Alter, 2003; Dart, 2004; Defourny and Nyssens, 2006; Haugh, 2005; Hockerts, 2006; Jones, 2007; Mair and Marti, 2009).

Writers on social entrepreneurship tend to describe the practice instead of operationalizing a definition (Dees & Emerson, 2001; Bygrave, 1994). As a result there is a significant lack of coherence in interpretations of exactly what is and what is not social entrepreneurship (Alford, S.H., Brown, L.D., Letts, C.W., 2004; CIRIEC, 2007). Compounding this difficulty is the multiple mutations of social entrepreneurship that have arisen in the literature such as social enterprise or social venture (Dart, 2002; Young, 2001). The confusion resulting from definitional ambiguity and arbitrary titling creates difficulty in studying what is social entrepreneurship (Jara, O., 1994). The interest in social and/or societal entrepreneurship has increased rapidly during the last decade. Still the field is young and fragmented and the combined heritage includes tensions and shortcomings (Hulgard, L., 2008).

### 4. REDICE PROJECT 2010-2012

***"Analysis and configuration of the profile of the social entrepreneur in social grades in Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work: transfer and mobilization of knowledge, skills and perspectives"***

During the period of time 2010 and 2012, was developed Redice project at University of Barcelona, leadered by department of didactics and organizational Education, in which there were defined the main lines of priority action to introduce Social Entrepreneurship to the grades, they were impacting training, skills of students and teachers, transversal competences at University of Barcelona, transition to college, relationship between the university and the workplace, studies tracking graduates, gender in university teaching (Beck, D., 2008; Brinkerhoff, P., 2001).

Through this idea some questions come to be the main research questions: What are the meanings of the concepts and practices of national and international social entrepreneurship in the University of

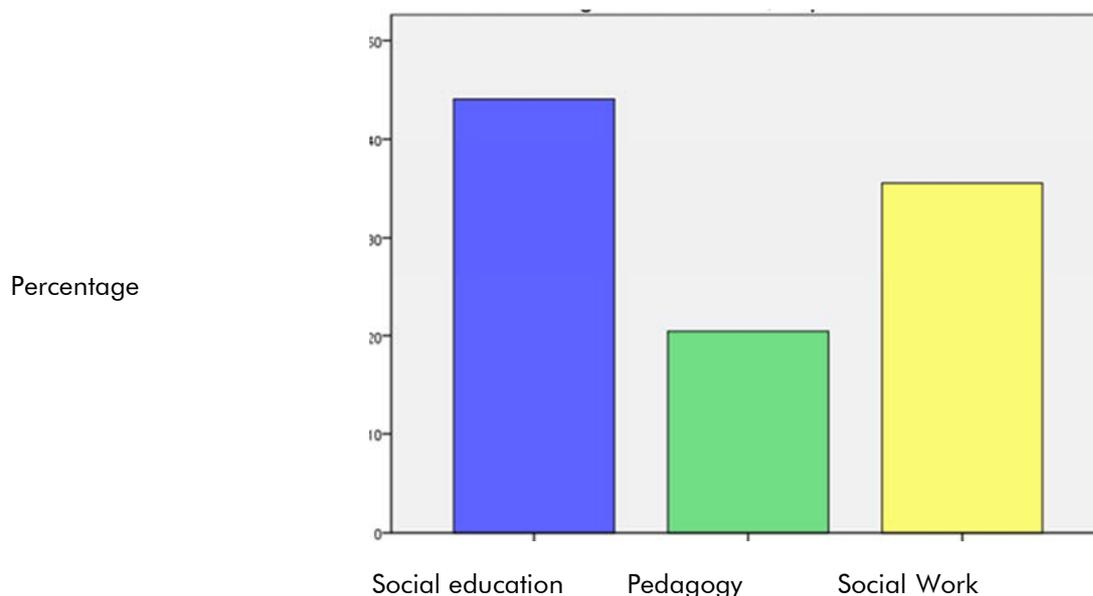
social sciences and in particular degrees in Social Education, Social Work and Pedagogy? What are the skills needed by students of social sciences and especially in Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work for the transfer of social knowledge and social entrepreneurship? What is the perception of students and lecturers of Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work on social entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer? As sensitize teachers to develop academic activities in this regard?

#### 4.1. Methodology of the study

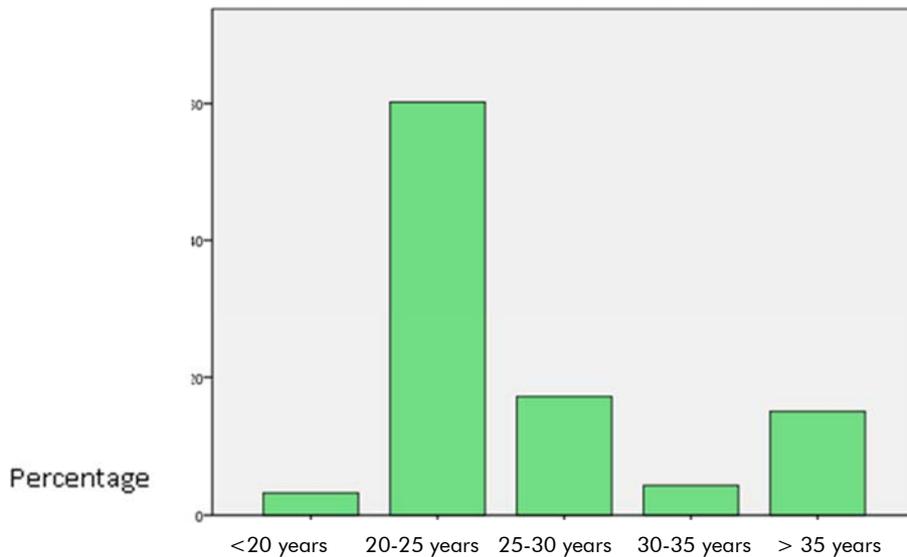
Validation of the questionnaire were done previously the final questionnaire and were done to a small sample of students, the questionnaire and the study subject at hand, has been well received among the 30 students who participated in the validation of this instrument. Many of these students know all or part of the concept of social entrepreneurship, while they were saying it was an issue that we discuss in any of the classes that make up the grades. Concern to the future of the economy, unemployment and difficulties in joining the labor market for graduates in Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work of University of Barcelona, makes to find employment opportunities and other ways of self-occupation, these students enquired during the validation session, express their interest in the University providing training and tools to acquire skills that will help them to create a company or social entity. The general format of the questionnaire has 23 items and variables of analysis to answer research questions about the objective of how to introduce Social Entrepreneurship in our University Teaching programs of Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work. Identifying best practices and improving teaching and knowledge transfer about Social Entrepreneurship as a way of self-occupation for our students.

#### 4.2. Study Population and Sample

The total population that participates to the questionnaire was 2.287 students of first, second and third Grades degrees and the sample of 93 valid responses were from the disciplines: Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work. Most of the responses were from Social Education students (Figure\_1).

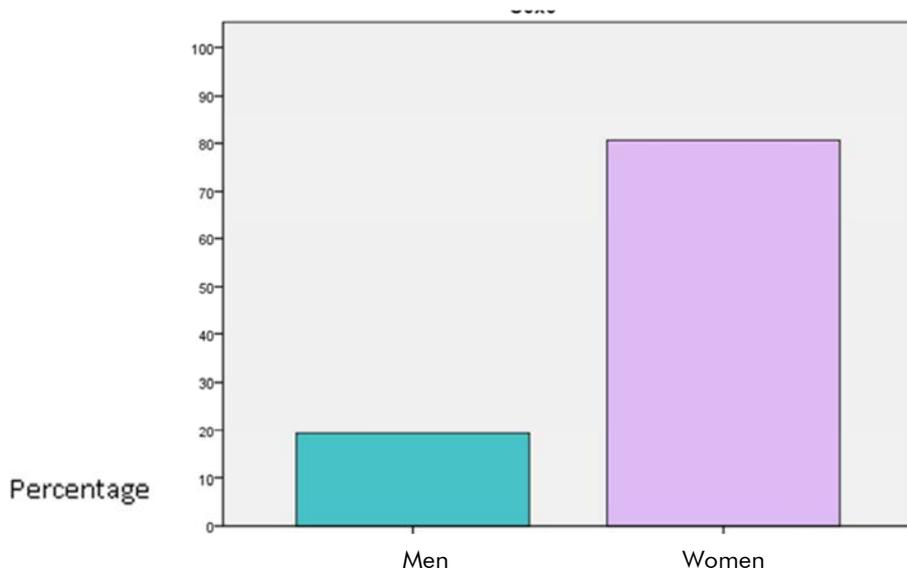


Figure\_1: Disciplines of students participants in the study



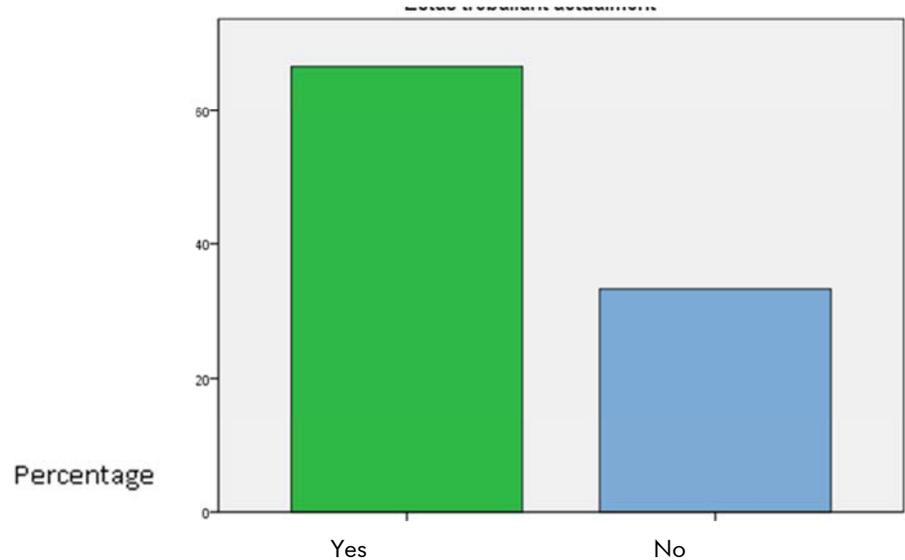
Figure\_2: Ages of students participants of the research study

The age of the sample the vast majority were from ages of 20-25 years old (Figure\_2). The representation of women were 80% of the sample, this is an important data representing female collective being more high formation and social entrepreneurship possibilities (Figure\_3).



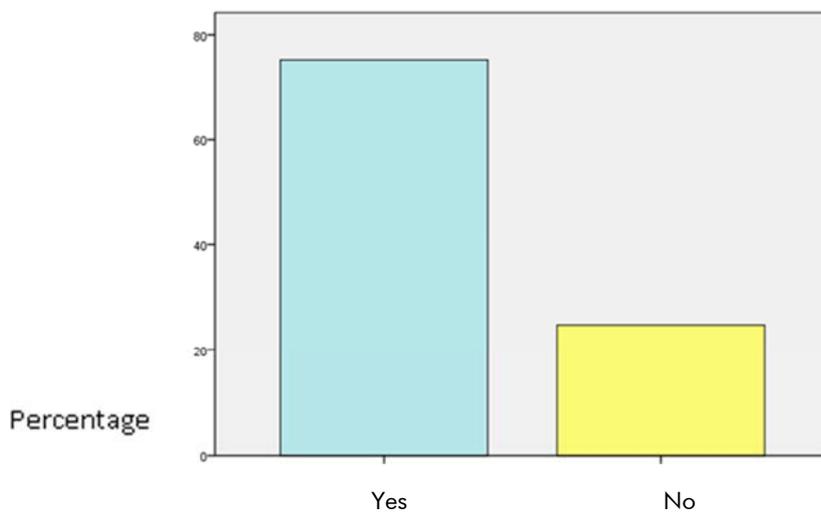
Figure\_3: Percentage of students as sex

The vast majority, 66.7% of our students are working or doing any economic activity. If we add the percentage of 33% of students that are not working from the sample, with 20,4% of the group that have a temporal work and the 14% with a service contract, the total result is 67,7% of potential students that could generate self-occupation by social entrepreneurship. See Figure\_4.



Figure\_4: Percentage of students working

Next Figure demonstrated a percentage of 75,3% of the students that have done volunteer activities as another relevant result, then this item shows the social participation and closed implications to social problems in which our students are very sensitized (Figure\_5).



Figure\_5: Percentage of students working

## 5. RESULTS OF A FIRST DATA ANALYSIS

For our research, we focused on the three grades of Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work. A first analysis of the study gave some conclusions about the competences that our students think need to develop social entrepreneurship. From the study we have find out that the perception of competences needed to social entrepreneurship are: leadership, social and communicative skills, commercial experience and business, proactivity, creativity and innovation, motivation, willingness to learn, initiative, sensitivity, social spirit, self-confidence, teamwork and cooperation, responsibility, analysis and decision-building capacity, decision-making, organizational capacity, training in project management, flexibility and adaptability.

Otherwise if we analyze the situation we see with a correlation analysis some significant relationship with variables in next table\_1:

Table\_1: Table of Correlations: SE and Decision making motivations

		MATRIMAJ Presently you are matriculat e:	MOTIVA FE Winning freedom of decision and action at work	V23_A Leadership	V24_A Family traditio n and possibi lity of workin g with family	V25_A The labor and economic market	V26_A Create somethi ng of value and success	V27_A Taste the adventure and personal capacity	V28_A Build a success organizati on with public reputation	RELAFUTU I thought about being a freelance
MATRIMAJ Presently you are matriculate:	Pearson Correlation	1	,023	,156	-,012	,164	,085	-,109	,092	,137
	Sig. (bilateral) N	.	,829	,136	,911	,116	,416	,296	,382	,191
MOTIVAFE Winning freedom of decision and action at work	Pearson Correlation	,023	1	,344(**)	,127	,247(*)	,174	,316(**)	,169	,318(**)
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,829	.	,001	,224	,017	,095	,002	,105	,002
V23_A Leadership	Pearson Correlation	,156	,344(**)	1	,179	,293(**)	,234(*)	,109	,224(*)	,187
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,136	,001	.	,087	,004	,024	,299	,031	,072
V24_A Family tradition and possibility of working with family	Pearson Correlation	-,012	,127	,179	1	-,083	-,005	,128	,208(*)	-,030
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,911	,224	,087	.	,431	,963	,220	,046	,779
V25_A The labor and economic market	Pearson Correlation	,164	,247(*)	,293(**)	-,083	1	,368(**)	,170	,356(**)	,137
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,116	,017	,004	,431	.	,000	,102	,000	,191
V26_A Create something of value and success	Pearson Correlation	,085	,174	,234(*)	-,005	,368(**)	1	,494(**)	,324(**)	-,009
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,416	,095	,024	,963	,000	.	,000	,002	,934
V27_A Taste the adventure and personal capacity	Pearson Correlation	-,109	,316(**)	,109	,128	,170	,494(**)	1	,322(**)	-,084
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,296	,002	,299	,220	,102	,000	.	,002	,425
V28_A Build a success organization with public reputation	Pearson Correlation	,092	,169	,224(*)	,208(*)	,356(**)	,324(**)	,322(**)	1	,022
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,382	,105	,031	,046	,000	,002	,002	.	,833
RELAFUTU I thought about being a freelance	Pearson Correlation	,137	,318(**)	,187	-,030	,137	-,009	-,084	,022	1
	Sig. (bilateral) N	,191	,002	,072	,779	,191	,934	,425	,833	.

\*\* Correlation is significant at level 0,01 (bilateral).

\* Correlation is significant at level 0,05 (bilateral).

Students see significant SE as a way of self-employment, and is also important in the decision the factor of being a way for winning freedom of decision and action at work, also they are interested in building a success organization with public reputation. This last item is also correlated with being freelance. As the results demonstrated crisis is affecting decision-making, less possibilities of employment market is correlated with the item in which students see SE as a future alternative of self-employment and also a way to put in practices leadership skills and an own professional project (Table\_1).

Adventure and motivation for leadering a social project promote students be the idea of creating social enterprise attractive.

The item of doing a volunteer activity is also correlated with the identification of SE activities and teaching through the grades, and with the motivation of seeing SE as a way of self-employment and experience close about Social Entrepreneurship. (Table\_2).

Most of the students don't know deeply what is Social Entrepreneurship and during this year were identified few subjects connected with organizational and communication disciplines subjects in which the issue of SE is treated.

Table\_2: Table of Correlations Volunteer activity and ES

		REALACTV Have you done volunteer work	ACTUALAC Presently have you done volunteer work?	SENTITPA Have you heard about Social Entrepreneurship in your academic / social / labor / professional and close room?	IDENTASS Can you identify the race in a subject you've tried Social Entrepreneurship	ESIMPOR T Social Entrepreneurship think may be important for your career?	EXPES Do you have experience in Social Entrepreneurship?	IDENEXPE Do you Identify any experience in your family of Social Entrepreneurship?	MOTIVAFE Winning freedom of decision and action at work
REALACTV Have you done volunteer work	Pearson Correlation	1	,394(**)	,431(**)	-,019	-,049	,207(*)	,210(*)	,225(*)
	Sig. (bilateral)	.	,000	,000	,858	,640	,047	,043	,030
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
ACTUALAC Presently have you done volunteer work?	Pearson Correlation	,394(**)	1	,259(*)	-,031	-,067	,322(**)	,265(*)	,100
	Sig. (bilateral)	,000	.	,012	,771	,523	,002	,010	,339
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
SENTITPA Have you heard about Social Entrepreneurship in your academic / social / labor / professional and close room?	Pearson Correlation	,431(**)	,259(*)	1	,183	,026	,317(**)	,332(**)	-,006
	Sig. (bilateral)	,000	,012	.	,080	,808	,002	,001	,951
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
IDENTASS Can you identify the	Pearson Correlation	-,019	-,031	,183	1	,003	,190	,096	,013

race in a subject you've tried Social Entrepreneurship	Sig. (bilateral)	,858	,771	,080	.	,979	,069	,360	,900
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
ESIMPORT Social Entrepreneurship think may be important for your career?	Pearson Correlation	-,049	-,067	,026	,003	1	,011	-,039	-,016
	Sig. (bilateral)	,640	,523	,808	,979	.	,917	,708	,876
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
EXPES Do you have experience in Social Entrepreneurship ?	Pearson Correlation	,207(*)	,322(**)	,317(**)	,190	,011	1	,344(**)	-,068
	Sig. (bilateral)	,047	,002	,002	,069	,917	.	,001	,520
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
IDENEXPE Do you Identify any experience in your family of Social Entrepreneurship ?	Pearson Correlation	,210(*)	,265(*)	,332(**)	,096	-,039	,344(**)	1	,100
	Sig. (bilateral)	,043	,010	,001	,360	,708	,001	.	,338
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
MOTIVAFE Winning freedom of decision and action at work	Pearson Correlation	,225(*)	,100	-,006	,013	-,016	-,068	,100	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	,030	,339	,951	,900	,876	,520	,338	.
	N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93

\*\* Correlation is significant at level 0,01 (bilateral).

\* Correlation is significant at level 0,05 (bilateral).

Students were questioned about which issues, objectives, learning activities, readings, lectures during the career, and so on they identified related to the Social Entrepreneurship. The results demonstrated that some evidences were being introduced but they are not still enough. Some of them are Organization and management entities socio-economics, some Social Entrepreneurship Conference, talks about the subject of current and emerging areas, conference of Sociology, learning communities, Community Development, Political Identity, Anthropology and challenges creating projects or needs analysis, the subject of inequality and exclusion, innovation in action, are some the initial experiences in which social entrepreneurship concepts appeared.

Students have no family experience of social entrepreneurship but they feel this focus of self-employment could be a great opportunity to develop their own ideas and having a more flexibility work. We also detected a need of professor to be improved in SE learning to introduce better practices in their teaching sessions.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND NEW CHALLENGES

This study was used to understand, visualize and create awareness of the needs of alternative employment, social needs and skills necessity for social entrepreneurship to improve the teaching and learning approach and adapt to university in the new social room. There is also a clear perception of the students on the need for social entrepreneurship. Students must take socially suggested, is also a close student has experience in entrepreneurship. Students have heard about social entrepreneurship, but few know or believe that they have the power to be social entrepreneur students recognize the importance of social entrepreneurship to develop their ideas. They recognize they have still lack of some competences to begin a social entrepreneurship project as accounting, business management,

specific knowledge on economics, business administration, marketing, finance, leadership, self-confidence, ability to search for information, entrepreneurship and Innovation skills, emotions management, motivation, analysis of needs of market and research of resources and funding.

At this time some challenges are appearing to introduce social entrepreneurship learnings at University of Barcelona as creating for all a social entrepreneurship culture to generate new ideas and social projects.

From the results of the research study we recommend as a conclusion:

1. Influence more and better in the introduction of Social Entrepreneurship (ES) in our degrees of Social Education, Pedagogy and Social Work. And analyze good practices of ES improvements that allow us University system itself.
2. Create opportunities to raise awareness of the need to change our economic and employment environment that requires new tools and skills for both students and faculty to be introduced in the teaching learning processes.
3. Collaborate more closely and Network with other external agents of the University to support the Social Entrepreneurship.
4. Create new habits and entrepreneurial culture, and raise social entrepreneurship as a career path open to the creation of self-employment.
5. Increase focus of SE through final work of degree to promote a line of SE projects.

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