

EXPANDED ABSTRACT

The identity of the social enterprise in Spain: analysis from four different socioeconomic realities

Scientific literature about Social Enterprises has become more relevant during the last years in Spain; even if it is not the same level of discussion as in other European countries in which the concept enjoys greater recognition and development. Although some examples of social enterprises can be identified in Spain since the fifteenth century, it is not until the last decade when the concept gained more popularity.

The objective of this paper is to analyze the reality of social enterprises in Spain and propose a typology of the Spanish social enterprise. To do so, EMES ideal definition of Social Enterprise has been taken as a reference to look at Spanish Social Enterprise in four socioeconomic realities: Social Economy, Third Sector of Social Action, Solidarity Economy and Social Entrepreneurship.

In order to achieve this objective, the work and methodology previously developed by the ICSEM Project is used as a starting point. The project aims to compare Social Enterprise models and their respective institutionalisation' processes across the world. In our case, although we will also include the dimensions of the EMES' ideal type of Social Enterprise, we will focus in Spain and use a different theoretical approach, more related to the socioeconomic framework in the target territory of study.

A literature review has been developed, focused on analyzing and describing the concept of social enterprise internationally and nationally. As a result, two main ideas have been identified: 1) There is no agreement on the definition of social enterprises at both levels. This is a consequence of the number and diversity of entities and business' organizations that co-exist under this concept, although different motivations and characteristics can be distinguished among them. 2) Taking into account the different conceptualizations of social enterprises, some authors (e.g. Dees & Anderson, 2006; Defourny & Nyssens, 2012) distinguish among two major schools of thought: the European and the Anglo-Saxon. These two schools use different approaches to study the social enterprise reality. The European school distinguish between social economy and solidarity economy approaches, whereas the Anglo-Saxon school uses the income generation approach (or Third Sector of Social Action) and the social entrepreneurship one.

Second, as result of our analysis, a matrix is proposed. The columns of the matrix are the indicators of the three dimensions (social, governmental and economic) of EMES' ideal type of

social enterprise definition. The files in the matrix correspond to the different Spanish socio-economic realities and the social enterprises that exist in them.

According to the obtained results, the following conclusions can be extracted. Firstly, social enterprises that are embedded in the market social economy, clearly fulfill the criteria from the economic and social dimensions. The governance criteria will depend of the ownership type of these organizations. Cooperatives, by its nature, adopt a participative and democratic decision making process, and in the case of WISE (Work Integration Social Enterprise) and CEE (in Spanish Centros Especiales de Empleo), governance will depend on their managers' intentions, which is not strange, taking into consideration their particular characteristics and their workers situation.

The Spanish Law of Social Economy (2011) refers in its preamble to the Charter of Principles of the social economy from CEP-CMAF¹, and in this same sense, Monzón (2006) considers intern democracy to be a conclusive variable in order to include a non-for-profit organization into the Social Economy. Therefore, when considering social enterprises from the Social Economy' perspective, the governance criteria is the decisive one, besides the limitation of profits.

However, and secondly, from the solidarity economy, debate on social change, the construction of alternative economic models, alternatives to capitalism or ways of combating poverty and social exclusion are the central focus of thought and reflection. Social enterprise is conceived as part of a social movement including organizations and activities that generate a solidarity and alternative thought and practice. Thus, besides the importance of the social and governance dimensions, when analyzed within the context of solidarity economy, is its social transformation mission, understood as a political implication, or the search for an economic and social paradigm change, what makes the difference in social enterprises.

Thirdly, organizations that emerge from the Third Sector of Social Action are characterized by their high compliance with the criteria of social dimension and governance. The economic indicators are met with lower intensity, depending on their market orientation extent. The fulfillment of the social dimension is justified by two characteristics: their clear orientation towards the general interest (as they are organizations of general interest by definition), and by being under the principle of non-distribution of benefits. The governance criteria and its democratic character is met by associations (because of their associative nature). In the case of foundations, it will depend on the will of its managers.

And fourthly, social enterprises from the social entrepreneurship sector are conceived as a business to resolve a social problem as a purpose. The main difference from the rest of social enterprises

1) Déclaration finale commune des organisations européennes de l'Économie Sociale, CEP-CMAF, 20 juin 2002.

is that their market orientation (their identity as a business) is really strong and this make the difference when comparing with the rest. The fulfillment of the social dimension will depend on the extent to which the social objective is accomplished, as the ownership type does not guarantee it, and there is no limitation for profit sharing. The fulfillment of the governance dimension, as well as the social dimension, will depend on the will of the entrepreneurs, since nothing prevents the decision from being based on the capital ownership.

Our analysis led to the recognition of different models of social enterprise in Spain depending on the socio-economic reality it is studied from, with continuities and ruptures. Each model emphasizes a particular aspect of the social enterprise and represents the way it looks at it and the priorities it implicitly proposes for its development.

The concept, in that sense, from a methodological point of view, should go hand in hand with the reality that wants to represent. It is essential to introduce a dynamic character to the concept, if the latter is to define the former.

KEYWORDS: Social Enterprise, Social Economy, Third Sector of Social Action, Solidarity Economy, Social Entrepreneurship.