

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS: EXPLORATORY RESEARCH FROM 4
CASE STUDIES**

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INTRODUCTION

The social and environmental problems that afflict humanity have existed for many years. Extreme poverty, water and air pollution, countless forms of discrimination, and the exclusion of minorities, among other challenges, present themselves to a greater or lesser extent in developing countries and also, in some cases, in rich and developed countries.

It is in this context that social enterprise emerge as one of the innovative alternatives in the field of social entrepreneurship, to generate environmental and/or social solutions, while generating profitability (DESA; KOCH, 2014; KERLIN, 2013; ZAHRA et al., 2008).

The current literature on the social enterprise phenomenon is still under construction (WRY; YORK, 2017; COMINI; BARKI; DE AGUIAR, 2012; BATTILANA; LEE, 2014; YUNUS, 2007; MAIR; NOBOA, 2006), however, it is of theoretical and empirical knowledge that these companies in fact contribute to the minimization of local and also global problems (CARRAHER; WELSH; SVILOKOS, 2016; BUGG-LEVINE; KOGUT; KULATILAKA, 2012; ZAHRA et al., 2009; SHARIR; LERNER, 2006).

Recent studies reinforce that the international competitive environment in which social enterprise entrepreneurs are inserting themselves has attracted the attention of researchers, that is, more and more companies are emerging that go beyond their national spectrum, seeking opportunities for operation in other countries (ALON; RAND; MERSLAND, 2018). It is indicated that the specific traits of these organizations, especially the mission and objectives that go beyond profitability, distinguish them from other companies studied in the usual theories of business internationalization (BOCKEN; FIL; PRABHU, 2016; KUSA, 2016; DESA; KOCH, 2014; FARDIG; HAKANSSON, 2014; DESA, 2012). It is understood that these new challenges and strategies for insertion in new markets should be taken into account when studying this type of social enterprise (DESA, 2012; FARDIG; HAKANSSON, 2014; WEERAWARDENA; MCDONALD; MORT, 2010).

Research on social entrepreneurship or social enterprise has not yet deeply explored social entrepreneurs working at the global level (ZAHRA ET AL., 2008; WONG et al., 2015; RANDØY; STRØM; MERSLAND, 2015; PRASETYO; LO; CHANG, 2016; DOBSON, ET AL., 2018). Similarly, the literature on business internationalization and international entrepreneurship does not present themes that are dedicated to exploring social causes and global problems of society (BUCKLEY; DOH; BENISCHKE, 2017; TUKAMUSHABA; OROBIA; GEORGE, 2011).

Marshall (2011) made the first effort to analyze social entrepreneurs who work in activities beyond the borders of their countries of origin. The author recognizes that there is an increase in the practical initiatives recognized as international social enterprise, although there is no structured and systematized information, the author reinforces the need for new studies to deepen the knowledge about these entrepreneurs. That is, despite the recognized relevance on the potential to generate positive impacts at a global level, it is necessary to obtain more theoretical clarity and practical examples on the performance of these companies and their entrepreneurs (FARDIG; HAKANSSON, 2014; SASSMANNSHAUSEN; VOLKMANN, 2018; KERLIN, 2013; ZAHRA et al., 2009).

Thus, the main objective of this research is to propose an initial conceptual framework on international social enterprise entrepreneurs and to advance the above-mentioned Marshall study.

This study seeks to contribute to the social enterprise literature by proposing conceptual structure and presenting characteristics about its entrepreneurs. The study also contributes to the approximation of the field of international entrepreneurship with that of social entrepreneurship, since these organizations present a new movement of international insertion, and represent a specific cut within the existing theories.

Thus, it is coherent to understand in an initial and exploratory manner the activity of new entrepreneurs of international social enterprise, and in this context, bring important contributions to the area of Administration. Finally, other researchers can add to their future research agendas themes that complement and relate to the objectives of this study.

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Social entrepreneurs have stood out in their international performance, researchers indicate the need for theoretical articulation in more robust fields to understand how the internationalization of social enterprise occurs (YANG; WU, 2015; ZAHRA et al., 2008). Although much of the internationalization literature deals with large corporations, specifically the role of the private sector (BEAMISH; LUPTON, 2016), current research tends to select small and medium-sized organizations as targets for new theoretical and empirical contributions (SERVANTIE et al., 2016).

In this sense, for Zahra et al. (2014) the intersection between ES and IS is a relevant approach in the literature with gaps to be explored by researchers. For the authors there is a great dialogue between the social and financial objectives of entrepreneurship and the growing global activities. They indicate that the intersection of these constructs represents several implications for IS, especially with regard to the study of the firm level. In other words, it appears that efforts are indeed needed to unite these two fields, and that more research needs to start this process of approximation. Aiming to contribute to this need, the systematic review carried out in this research allowed us to find recent articles that indicate the main future paths that may help in the articulation between ES and IS.

In general, it has been found that current studies focus on efforts to approximate fields through firm-level analysis. According to Zahra et al. (2014), there is a large gap between the public and private sectors that represents several social and environmental problems, in which new research can help with strategies and new models that result in positive transnational impacts. Thus, the literature indicates that scholars in the field of internationalization should join forces with social and behavioral scientists to include critical global issues in their research, such as environmental issues, extreme poverty, social exclusion, discrimination and migration issues (BUCKLEY; DOH; BENISCHKE, 2017).

While social enterprise is increasingly present and impacting globally, scientific publications on the subject are still under construction (DESA, 2012; DESA; KOCH, 2014; FARDIG; HAKANSSON, 2014).

One of the first investigations identified in social enterprise in an international context came from Zahra et al. (2008), the authors concluded that the organizations surveyed were driven by social and commercial opportunities. In addition, in examining the geographical scope and the processes of internationalization, the authors noted that most international social enterprise were already born or have become so in a short period of time.

When verifying the researches that bring the fields of IS and ES closer together with a focus on the phenomenon of social enterprise, eleven (11) researches published in journals were identified, they are:

Table 1 - Summary of the academic literature on international social enterprise

Authors	Main Contributions
ZAHRA et al., 2008	- Businesses driven by social and commercial opportunities. - Signs of being <i>Born Globals</i> .
MARSHALL, 2011	- Social entrepreneurs at the international level maintain a fundamental belief in the market as a mechanism of social transformation. - Conceptualization of the idea of international social entrepreneurs.
DESA, 2012	- Analyzed the insertion environment of social enterprise. - They face hostile institutional environments.
KERLIN, 2013	- Social enterprise adapt to the specific needs and institutional conditions of each country.
FARDIG; HAKANSSON, 2014	- Social enterprise differ from traditional corporations in their speed of internationalization. - The most frequent form of entry is to establish partnerships with foreign actors.
DESA; KOCH, 2014	- Negative consequences of the globalisation of social enterprise - Need for alternative forms of growth for social enterprise
WONG et al. , 2015	- Social enterprise focused on financial performance in order to increase the chances of survival. - They tend to favour social impact over profit maximisation.
RANDØY; STRØM; MERSLAND, 2015	- Internationalization tends to produce businesses with superior performance related to cost and governance aspects.
YANG; WU, 2015	- Social entrepreneurs increasingly use market mechanisms and the skills and knowledge of traditional businesses
PRASETYO; LO; CHANG, 2016	- International social enterprise have high levels of commitment, honesty, leadership and business acumen (background).
DOBSON et al., 2018	- The business model does not need to be mature or even proven for internationalization to happen.

Source: Systematic literature review

Concerned about the negative consequences of globalization, Desa and Koch (2014) examined the breadth and depth of international social enterprise outcomes and noted that future research should investigate alternative forms of growth for social enterprise, according to local and global contexts, as well as the organizational and human actors involved.

When studying 295 microcredit banks (a specific type of social enterprise), Randøy, Strøm and Mersland (2015) realized that internationalization tends to produce businesses with superior performance due to four main aspects: a) economies of scale, especially in knowledge; b) lower agency and market internalization costs; c) lower cost of capital when accessing international funds and, finally, d) improved corporate governance. There is an effort to understand and conceptualize the international social entrepreneurs conducted by Marshall (2011), when analyzing the speech of three entrepreneurs in different cases, the author recognizes that there are still many points to be investigated in the theme and that more

qualitative and deep studies need to be done with those who are working in the practice of internationalization of this type of company.

Thus, when analyzing the work of researchers on the theme of international social enterprise, it is possible to state that there is much to study about these organizations, and that there are not frequent approaches in relation to the individual (international social entrepreneur).

There is then the need for a conceptual advance and especially the deep understanding of entrepreneurs, by understanding how they are characterized and how they can seek new opportunities to expand consumer markets, increasing the social impact (BOCKEN; FIL; PRABHU, 2016). There are also still gaps regarding the relationship between the economic logic of traditional corporations at the global level and initiatives of an emotional nature of social causes (TUKAMUSHABA; OROBIA; GEORGE, 2011).

In fact, the combination of a clear mission to generate social value and the application of innovative solutions to the needs of society through the use of market mechanisms is increasing the economic importance and influence of social enterprise both locally and internationally (KUSA, 2016; FARDIG; HAKANSSON, 2014). Some social enterprise, however, are challenged by a limited potential market due to the economic conditions in certain countries, generating incentives to seek new opportunities outside their home country (YANG; WU, 2015). Finally, it is understood that the intersection of the fields of IS and ES indicates a new phenomenon called International Social Entrepreneurship (IS). This emerging phenomenon emphasizes the mixed value and makes explicit the inseparability of some existing concepts and models to explain entrepreneurial activities with social missions along with international operations (CHEN; SAARENKETO; PUUMALAINEN, 2016). This research is committed to articulating the existing literature presented, with the secondary and primary data collected to contribute to the advancement of knowledge about international social enterprise entrepreneurs.

METHODOLOGY

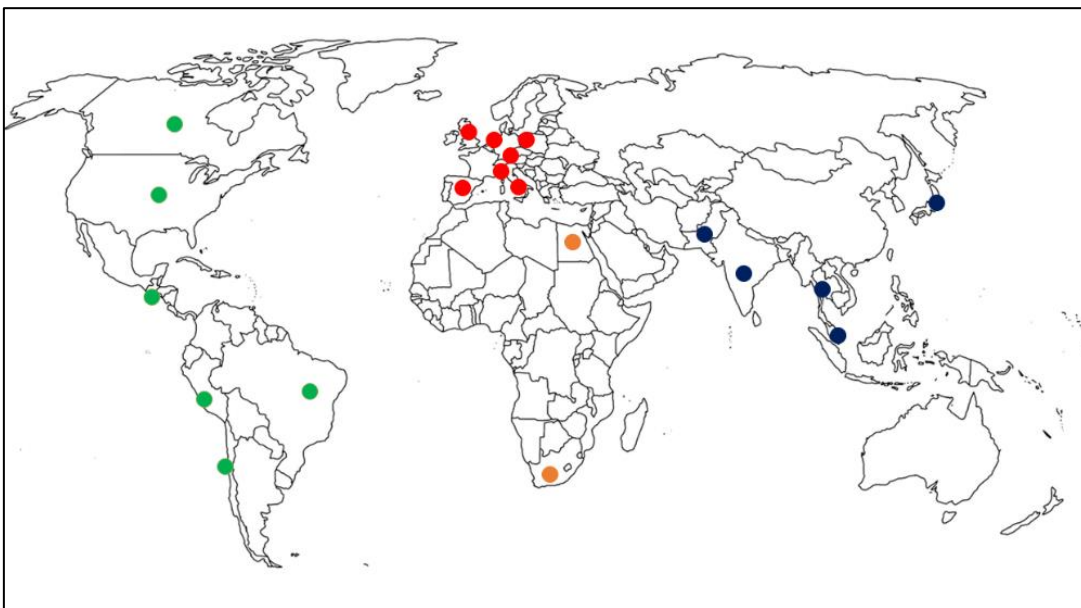
This research is classified as qualitative, exploratory in nature. This approach is appropriate to investigate international social entrepreneurs, since it is a theme that emerges in the scientific literature (WONG et al., 2015; ZAHRA; NEWAY; LI, 2014), that is, little is known in theory about this type of organization and its entrepreneurs. In this context, initial qualitative researches of familiarization and understanding of new phenomena are necessary (PATTON, 2005; MORGAN; SMIRCICH, 1980). Another important point that reinforces this approach is the lack of qualitative research in internationalization studies, and their articulations with new organizational models (WELCH; PIEKKARI, 2017; BUCKLEY; DOH; BENISCHKE, 2017; DOZ, 2011; BIRKINSHAW; BRANNEN; TUNG, 2011). Thus, the methodological choice adopted is considered relevant for the construction of the proposed knowledge. The qualitative research allows, identify, analyze and present new phenomena in the literature, from various perspectives, with the aim of understanding the social relationships of people and organizations (CRESWELL, 2010). Thus, a qualitative-exploratory approach is justified by the lack of understanding of the basic elements and characteristics that make up international social enterprise and their entrepreneurs.

The starting point of the research was the setting up of a database on international social enterprise. Pre-existing bases were considered such as ASHOKA (2017), FORBES MAGAZINE (2016 and 2017), SOCIAL ENTERPRISE UK (2017) and SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK DIRECTORY OF ACCREDITED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES (2017). 217 international social enterprise were located. Each organization was checked from their websites to see if they were, in fact, internationalized. Some of these organizations could not

be investigated by language - Chinese, Arabic and Japanese and were discarded. In addition, we sought to check whether they were organizations operating in more than one country. Following this verification process, 67 international social businesses were considered as the secondary database. The next step was to collect information about the personal and professional trajectory of each entrepreneur from various sources, such as personal websites, description on the international social business website, reports, among others. The results of this first stage of the research were as follows:

Most headquarters are currently located in America (62.6%), most notably in the United States, followed by Europe (19.4%). Despite this concentration, Europe has more countries represented in the sample, with seven in total. The numbers are lowest in Asia (13.6%) and Africa (4.4%):

Figure 1 - ISE host countries around the world



Source: Authors

From the above analysis, it was also possible to ascertain the ISE paths in relation to operations in other countries. Most of the sample (74.6%) is based in developed countries, with a smaller number in developing countries (25.4%). In both categories, most organizations operate most often in developing countries (and more than half do so exclusively).

Of the ISE originating in developed countries, approximately half (51.1%) operate only in developing countries, about one third (32.6%) operate in both types of country and the remainder (16.3%) only in developed countries. Of ISEs based in developing countries, just over half (55.5%) work exclusively in developing countries and the remainder (44.5%) in both types; No organizations working exclusively in developed countries were found. The results indicate that social / environmental problems are not unique to developing countries. It is possible that innovative solutions can be replicated in many different realities, including solutions generated in developing countries towards developed countries.

Regarding the year of foundation, there is a noticeable peak between 2000 and 2010 (49% of the sample). It should be noted, however, that this information only covers organizations founded by 2016, so there seems to be a growing trend in recent years, with 21 organizations in just five years.

When examining the fields of activity of the ISE, those with the largest number of organizations are education and environment (18.0% each), which is consistent with other

findings in the literature (MÉNDEZ-PICAZO; RIBEIRO-SORIANO; GALINDO-MARTÍN, 2015; LUMPKIN et al., 2013, MILLER et al., 2012; ZAHRA et al., 2009). The next predominant field is online platforms (16.0%), indicating how social enterprise are increasingly using technology to reach their target audience and spread their services and products. Two out of three use the website not only for information but also for sales. Fields with fewer examples in the sample, such as events and franchises, may represent new business models and trends being adapted and incorporated by social entrepreneurs.

The next step was to collect primary data from in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs. It was possible to send 45 emails directly to the entrepreneur's email address and 22 emails to general corporate domains (ex: contact@xxx.com). Two or three messages were sent to these entrepreneurs over 20 days and four founders agreed to be interviewed, with ISEs from different countries (US, Chile, UK and Lebanon).

Case studies

It was decided to conduct in-depth interviews since the literature on social entrepreneurship treats as something essential to understand the background and the social cause that moves an entrepreneur to build the mission and purpose of a business (AUSTIN; STEVENSON; WEI-SKILLERN, 2006), that is, elements that can be extracted from the open speech of entrepreneurs. In addition, the internationalization literature indicates that the background and deeper factors present in the biography of an entrepreneur help explain how the choice for internationalization occurs (MURALIDHARAN; PATHAK, 2017; MARTINEAU; PASTORIZA, 2016; TERJESEN; HESSELS; LI, 2016). Thus, the interviewees selected were the founders of international social enterprise, the social entrepreneur responsible for the strategic direction of the company (RANDØY; STRØM; MERSLAND, 2015).

To validate the main elements that would be investigated in the interviews, a literature review was used. It was found that in order to respond to the proposed objective, and in fact analyze the characteristics of the individual, it was necessary to investigate aspects of the biography, such as: professional experiences, academic training, international experiences, participation in social causes, motivators and different contexts and types of learning (MARTINEAU; PASTORIZA, 2016; TERJESEN; HESSELS; LI, 2016).

Thus, with the questionnaire structured based on the literature on social entrepreneurs, it was possible to verify several elements and characteristics already used for analysis that would be essential for characterization of the international social entrepreneur.

The selection of enterprises for this study is based on convenience sampling. Prior preparation via e-mail was carried out to clarify the interview objectives; confidentiality; format of the interview and possible questions addressed. Then the interview protocol was conducted, three face-to-face via video conference in English language, by *Zoom* software and one via mobile phone in Spanish language. All of them were recorded for the realization of literal transcriptions and translations. In conclusion, with all the data collected, it was possible to begin the analysis of the data obtained.

Table 2 – Case study profiles

Social Enterprise	Product/service	Founder	Citizenship
Zoomal	Crowdfunding	Abdallah Absi	Lebanon
TriCiclos	Recycling Solutions	Gonzalo Muñoz	Chile
Street Business School	Training Program	Devin Hibbard	USA
Integrity Action	Technologic solutions	Fredrik Galtung	Norway

Source: Authors

Zoomal

Based in Lebanon, Zoomaal started in early 2012. It was founded by Abdallah Absi. Zoomaal encourages Arab entrepreneurs and creatives, including artists, filmmakers and authors, to submit their project pitches for funding by supporters from all around the world. Supporters can contribute any amount they like to projects of their choice, and the startups' founders offer rewards to supporters based on their contributions. Any Arab creative and innovator can submit their projects. Your campaign will have 4 essential parts, the video, the description, the reward packages and your short biography. Afterwards, the Zoomaal project submission team will take a look at your project and if it is ready they'll publish it on the platform to start receiving funds. Currently the social enterprise operates in: Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, France, Iraq, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and other Middle Eastern countries. Sector: Fundraising Size: 1-10 employees

TriCiclos

Originally from Chile, TriCiclos was founded in 2009 by Gonzalo Muñoz, winner of the national award for innovation and environment (AVONNI, 2011); Chilean Social Entrepreneur of the Year (Schwab Foundation 2013) and co-founder of System B. TriCiclos creates solutions to eliminate the concept of waste. They do this by engineering for a circular economy to reduce the problem of waste before it is generated or by ensuring it has the most circular destination possible (through reuse, return and recycling). It innovates by operating throughout the production chain, consuming and disposing of materials and was also the first company in Latin America to certify as Company B. The company is headquartered in Chile, Brazil, Colombia and Peru. Sector: Environmental services. Size: 51-100 employees.

Street Business School

Based in Colorado (USA), Street Business School was founded in 2015 by Devin Hibbard, more than 15 years of experience working directly with women living in extreme poverty. She is a champion of connections and strives to build bridges between concerned world citizens and people living on less than \$3 a day. Street Business School is a global leader in entrepreneurship educational training, that equips women living in poverty with the knowledge they need to build sustainable small businesses—and we empower them with the confidence to believe in themselves and seize opportunity. Street Business School is on a mission to end generational poverty by empowering women as entrepreneurs. The company seeks reach 1 million women by 2027 through an innovative social franchise model to help others bring our world-changing model to their communities. The enterprise is present in 17 African countries. Sector: Education. Size: 11-50 employees

Integrity Action

Based in England, Integrity Action (formerly known as Tiri) was founded in 2003, and changed its name to Integrity Action in 2012. Was funded by Fredrik Galtung. Fredrik has over 25 years of experience working on practical solutions for building integrity and trust and curbing corruption. Integrity Action has a clear focus: to promote integrity in the delivery of essential services, infrastructure, and development projects in some of the world's most challenging environments. Using mobile technology, we enable citizens to monitor the delivery of projects local to them – and to solve the problems they find. Has activities in: Afghanistan, DR Congo, Nepal, Tanzania and Kenya. Sector: Mobile technology. Size: 11-50 employees.

Form of Data Analysis

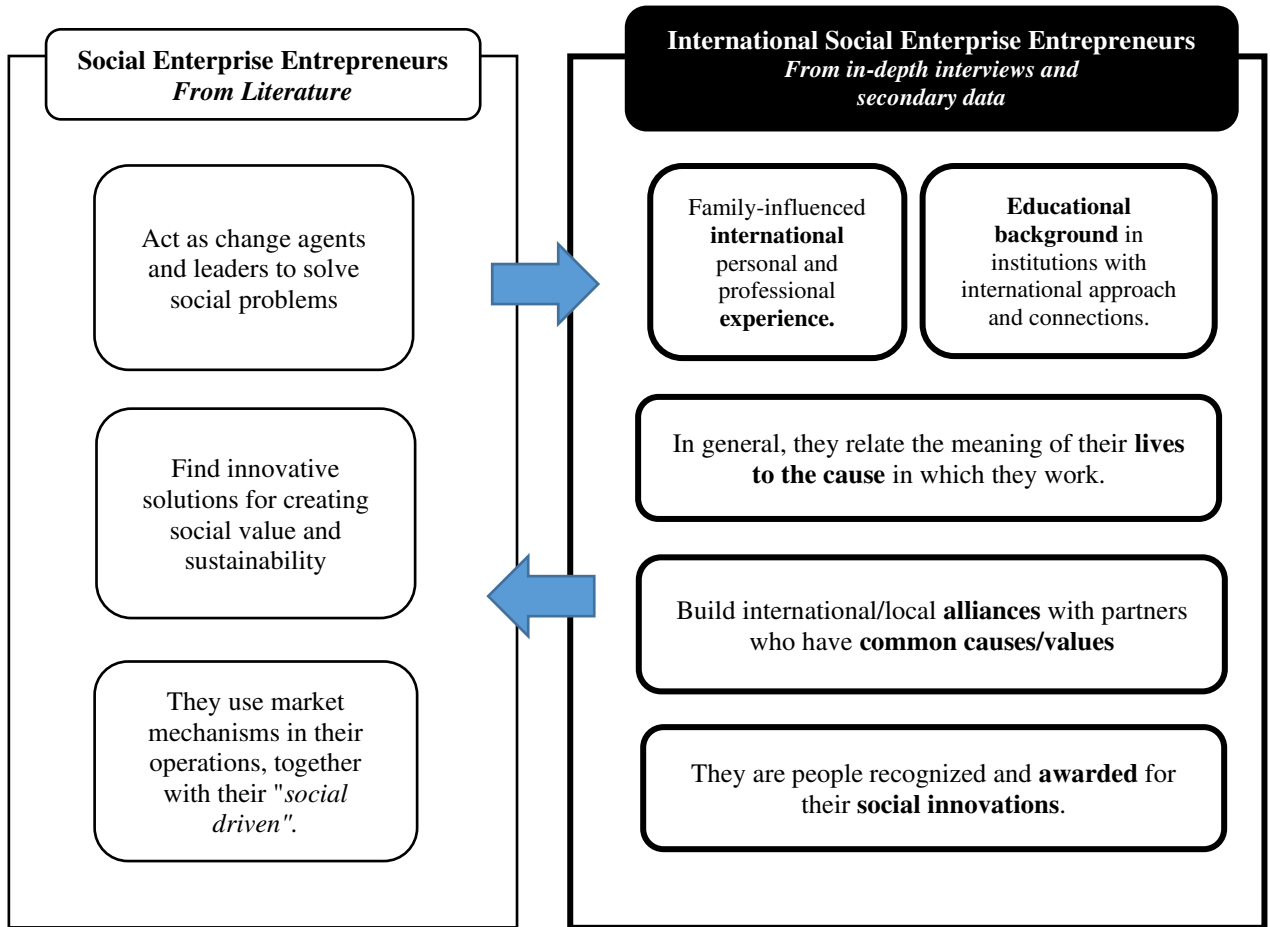
To ensure the reliability of the research, multiple sources of evidence were adopted, through the collection of primary and secondary data, and also through the literature review. Thus, the content analysis technique was used in all data collected in order to extract information to corroborate the existing literature and contribute with new information. This technique is used by different researchers interested in exploring phenomena, organizations and facts in a systematic way and uses a database to collect information (GAUR; KUMAR, 2018; TERJESEN; HESSELS; LI, 2016; SUNDURAMURTHY ET AL, 2016; CERES; DUYGU, 2015; PALLAS; ECONOMIDES, 2008). It has been present for decades in the field of organizations, because it is an alternative to explore qualitative issues and, in some cases, make quantitative inferences. This type of research is recommended before deeper and more detailed empirical studies (MEYSKENS et al., 2010).

Thus, triangulation was performed between the theoretical review, database content analysis and in-depth interviews. To assist this analysis, *NVIVO* software was used to encode all content to be analyzed, thus allowing the categorization of texts and a better reading (HOSSAIN; KAURANEN, 2017). At this stage, all the texts were read at least three times to ensure the reliability of the investigation, as advised by several authors (WELCH; PIEKKARI, 2017; TERJESEN; HESSELS; LI, 2016; SUNDURAMURTHY et al., 2016; NACAR; BURNAZ, 2011; MEYSKENS et al., 2010).

INITIAL CONCEPTUAL PROPOSAL ON INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ENTREPRENEURS

We sought the theoretical and empirical efforts that help characterize international social entrepreneurs. Thus, the effort made indicates the aspects that form an initial conceptual structure based on the existing literature, secondary data and the primary data collected:

Figure 2 - Initial Conceptual Proposal on International Social Enterprise Entrepreneurs



Source: Marshall (2011), Färdig and Håkansson (2014), and in-depth interviews.

In common with social entrepreneurs who operate only in their country of origin, respondents are resilient and determined about the risks and main challenges they may face, also value the importance of developing empathy, empathy and humility to achieve their objectives and social / environmental mission (SMITH; BELL; WATTS, 2014; YITSHAKI; KROPP, 2011). It can be seen, then, that the speech of entrepreneurs is aligned with the actions of change agents and leaders to solve social problems, who seek innovative solutions to achieve their social and environmental objectives and use market mechanisms along with their "social driven". On the other hand, some characteristics were identified that differentiate social entrepreneurs who operate internationally:

The first one is related to training as an individual since childhood, the entrepreneurs were naturally directed by their parents to live in various countries and know different languages and cultures. At this point it is important to reinforce that it was not a choice of the entrepreneur when he was a child, they were all influenced by parents to live in different environments. As a consequence, entrepreneurs are ahead of others when it comes to the knowledge of different realities, a point indicated in the interviews is the advantage and privileges they obtained, a fact that was essential to be able to act with their business. All of the entrepreneurs in two speak up and recognize the privileges they have had since they were very young, and that this motivated them to make a difference for those who did not have the same opportunities. In other words, when analyzing the life trajectory of the interviewees, it can be seen that there is a family influence on their performance as international social entrepreneurs.

Another relevant aspect is the way entrepreneurs relate to the cause in which they operate in ISE. Apparently there is no dissociation between the life goals, and the goals set to solve the social and/or environmental problem in question. In short, entrepreneurs take it as their life responsibility to resolve or be responsible for changing the community and people. This aspect is not necessarily linked only to international action, however it was a constant element in the speech of the entrepreneurs that is, throughout their lives they encountered various realities, and that the "inconvenience" about global problems was frequent, and consequently they saw no sense in living without acting as international social entrepreneurs. Although this aspect is relevant in the interviewees' speech, further efforts are still needed to investigate this aspect.

A third aspect relates to the training of these entrepreneurs. It is indicated that there is a predominance of academic training of international social entrepreneurs in prestigious institutions with education in a global perspective, such as: Harvard University; Babson College Stanford University; London School of Economics; Liverpool University, among others. In other words, these advantages and privileges can make all the difference in acting in ISE.

In this sense, entrepreneurs believe that to act internationally it is necessary to be increasingly open to continuous learning, and also the development of skills that go beyond just content, which work communication and behavioral aspects. These skills are connected with the concept of so-called *Soft Skills* (RATNASARI; DJAFRI, 2015). They are characterized as often subjective competences, difficult to assess (HAMILTON; CARBONE; JOLLANDS, 2015). The notes indicate that international social entrepreneurs need to be concerned about developing behavioral attributes and relationship skills. This may justify the innovative and personal development approach of the universities mentioned above.

And finally, a fourth aspect represents the construction of international and local alliances. This element appears as a differential in this type of entrepreneur. All the interviewees point out an enormous effort in the construction of partnerships, the entrepreneurs indicate the need for association with support from renowned organizations, such as being an Ashoka *fellow*. However, it is not about any partnership, it is necessary to seek and interact with partners who have a common "nuisance" about some social or environmental cause. Entrepreneurs point out that it is essential that their partners know exactly what impact you want to have and how you intend to conduct your operations in multiple countries. In this sense the entrepreneurs' speech is related to the concept studied by Plaskoff (2012) in the field of social entrepreneurship, called "learning by presence". This concept indicates learning based on engaging closely with people, collaborating and building relationships in communities. In other words, it is apparently not enough for a social enterprise to act internationally to conduct market studies or recognize the context, it is necessary to be and live within other economic and social realities.

Another relevant aspect about relationship building is the amount of awards and recognition to which international social enterprise entrepreneurs are submitted, such as: Nobel Prize; EIT Change Award; Ramon Magsaysay Award; 21st Century Visionary Award; Muhammad Ali Humanitarian Award, among others. It is understood that these recognitions help legitimize the performance of these entrepreneurs at a global level (HARRISON; JEPSEN, 2015). However, more theoretical and empirical efforts are also needed to understand this relationship.

Finally, it is considered that this initial conceptual structure brings elements that relate to concepts already existing in the literature to understand the international performance of these entrepreneurs. This was possible given the articulation with the literature, the construction of the empirical database and finally, the in-depth interviews. The results are complementary to the findings of Marshall (2011), by scoring the aspects that distinguish social entrepreneurs who act at a global level, specifically in the convergence of the statements of entrepreneurs

from three (3) different continents. In any case, it is concluded that the analysis of the results and the articulation of the sources of evidence achieved the proposed objective.

In summary, the findings of this research were possible from the intersection of different sources of evidence.

Table 3 - Characteristics found and sources of evidence

Description of aspects	Sources of evidence		
	Literature	Secondary data	In-depth interviews
1 - Have a life trajectory and international professional practice with family influence	YES Marshall (2011) Färdig e Håkansson (2014)	YES Biography (Official Websites; Ashoka Website; News and Reports)	YES
2 - They have a solid educational background in a renowned institution that values internationalization.	NO	YES	YES
3 - In general, they relate the meaning of life itself to the cause in which they operate.	NO	YES Biography (Official Websites; Ashoka Website; News and Reports)	YES
4 – They are people recognized and awarded for their social innovations.	NO	YES	YES
5 - Build international / local alliances with partners with common causes / values.	YES Marshall (2011) Färdig e Håkansson (2014)	YES Documents and websites	YES

Source: Marshall (2011), Färdig and Håkansson (2014), secondary data and in-depth interviews.

It should be noted that the categories on (i) solid formation in internationalized institutions, (ii) are entrepreneurs who attribute the meaning of their lives to the cause they defend and, finally, (iii) are people recognized and rewarded for their social innovations are unprecedented in the academic literature, that is, they represent the main findings of this research.

CLOSING REMARKS

It is understood that the research achieved the proposed objective by presenting an initial conceptual framework on international social enterprise entrepreneurs. In addition, it was also possible to carry out an exploratory effort that helped in the initial understanding of the topic. From a practical point of view, the study contributes with an unprecedented empirical database on ISE. This type of systematization of data is essential for the development of new studies on the subject, especially to generate reports and information for organizations that promote this type of activity (accelerators and incubators) and to attract new investors and consumers.

In relation to the theoretical contributions, the study articulates an initial conceptual proposal on international social enterprise entrepreneurs, presenting characteristics that support evidence for more robust and statistical tests.

The study also makes it possible to indicate paths for further studies according to the results found. The first of these is in the ISE performance relationship, there are companies that have left emerging countries to operate in developed and developing countries, this result indicates that new studies can analyze the movement of ISE insertion in different economies (firm level). Another relevant point is the continuation of research on international social entrepreneurs, the results present elements that differentiate individuals who seek global solutions, but more efforts are still needed to reinforce the information found, through more studies on the individual. Broader analyses are also indicated when there is a database with a larger number of entrepreneurs that allows this type of research.

Despite the exploratory nature and the various results found in this study, some limitations are evident. The number of interviewees and ISE found is still relatively low. The literature on the subject is still incipient, a fact that may hinder the analysis of the data found, since it is necessary to be frequently relating the findings to other better developed fields. On the other hand, it is necessary to recognize the difficulty of access for these companies, and especially the contact with international social entrepreneurs around the world. As well as the full speech of entrepreneurs who founded ISE on different continents (North America, Europe, Middle East and South America).

In conclusion, it is understood that the contributions of this work provide subsidies for future researchers to deepen their knowledge on the subject, specifically on the individual level (International Social Enterprise Entrepreneurs) and on the firm level (International Social Enterprise). This advancement of knowledge will require efforts from different theoretical fields and scholars who have hybrid interests need to join forces to include global and critical issues in conjunction with international action practices (CHEN; SAARENKETO; PUUMALAINEN, 2016; YANG; WU, 2015; ZAHRA et al., 2008).

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