



Social Enterprise in Mexico:

Higher Education & Beyond



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Research Overview

Update the status of HEI's contributions to social enterprise and innovation in Mexico.

Identify HEI's policy innovations designed to open spaces for Universities to integrate social enterprise and innovation as a strategy to engage with communities.

Determine how HEI are prioritising financial, technical, physical and human resources, networks, knowledge and expertise to consolidate their participation in social enterprise and innovation.

Analyse HEI best practice in assessing the impact of social enterprise and innovation activity, from the academic perspective and from the external community engagement perspective.

Identify relevant challenges for HEI to actively participate in the promotion of social value, with a focus on social enterprise and social innovation.

Better understand the role that universities and research centres can play in the promotion of social enterprise by innovating in their own structures and institutional priorities.

Methodology

1	In-depth Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore global, Latin American and Mexican literature in relation to social enterprise and higher education
2	Participant semi-structured Interviews (Single/Group) (N=37) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore perceptions of multi-stakeholder groups on the social enterprise ecosystem
3	Online Survey (N=73) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statistical analysis of survey data.thematic analysis of interview data• Thematic analysis of interview data
4	Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore perceptions of multi-stakeholder groups on the social enterprise ecosystem
5	Triangulation of Data <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Triangulation of quant/qual data into cohesive analytical discussion on social enterprise and higher education
6	Develop Report & Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report findings and recommendations for improving HE engagement with SE ecosystem

Quantitative Data ($N = 73$)

- Age-range: 18-25 years (2.7%); 26-35 years (17.8%); 36-45 years (38.4%); 46-55 years (26.0%); 56-65 years (13.7%); and 66+ years (1.4%)
- Most participants (63.0%) belonged to HEIs, with others working for the NGO/charity, private and public sectors (8.2% each), social enterprises (6.9%), and government (2.7%).
- For the academic respondents, their fields of expertise were broad, with 28.3% based in business schools - research and teaching tracks (60.9%) and those on teaching-only tracks (39.1%).
- Most had significant experience of working in social enterprise and innovation, with 80.5% having worked six or more years in the field [nearly half (43.5%) had worked in the field for 10+ years].
- Around 30.4% of the academic respondents were Instructors/Trainers in universities, with 17.4% being researchers and 10.9% being Programme Directors; a total of 15.2% were Professors/Assistant Professors.

Qualitative Findings

Community Engagement

Social Enterprise in Mexico – Definition and Ecosystem

Social Enterprise and Governmental Policies

Higher Education

Partnership/ Collaboration

Opportunity for Expansion

Themes

Definition and Ecosystem

- Variation in definitions of social enterprise and innovation - no official definition and that creates “*chaos.*” (N11– HEI)
- Social enterprise and social innovation shows that it is variable and fluid (Teasdale, 2012:100)
- Diverse practices in social enterprise and innovation shaped by the socio-economic, political, cultural and religious histories of countries (Hazenberg et al. 2016).
- Establishing a common definition is essential in developing an ecosystem that support social enterprise and innovation.



Government Policies

There's no government policy (N15)

- Developments in social enterprise and innovation in Mexico are intrinsically linked to developments in the 'social economy'.
- However, national developments do not offer direct guidance on social enterprise and innovation.

There is a very frontal attack of government, federal government to social purpose organisations" (N15).

- Stakeholders did not think that government policies were supportive of social entrepreneurship and innovation.



Government Policies

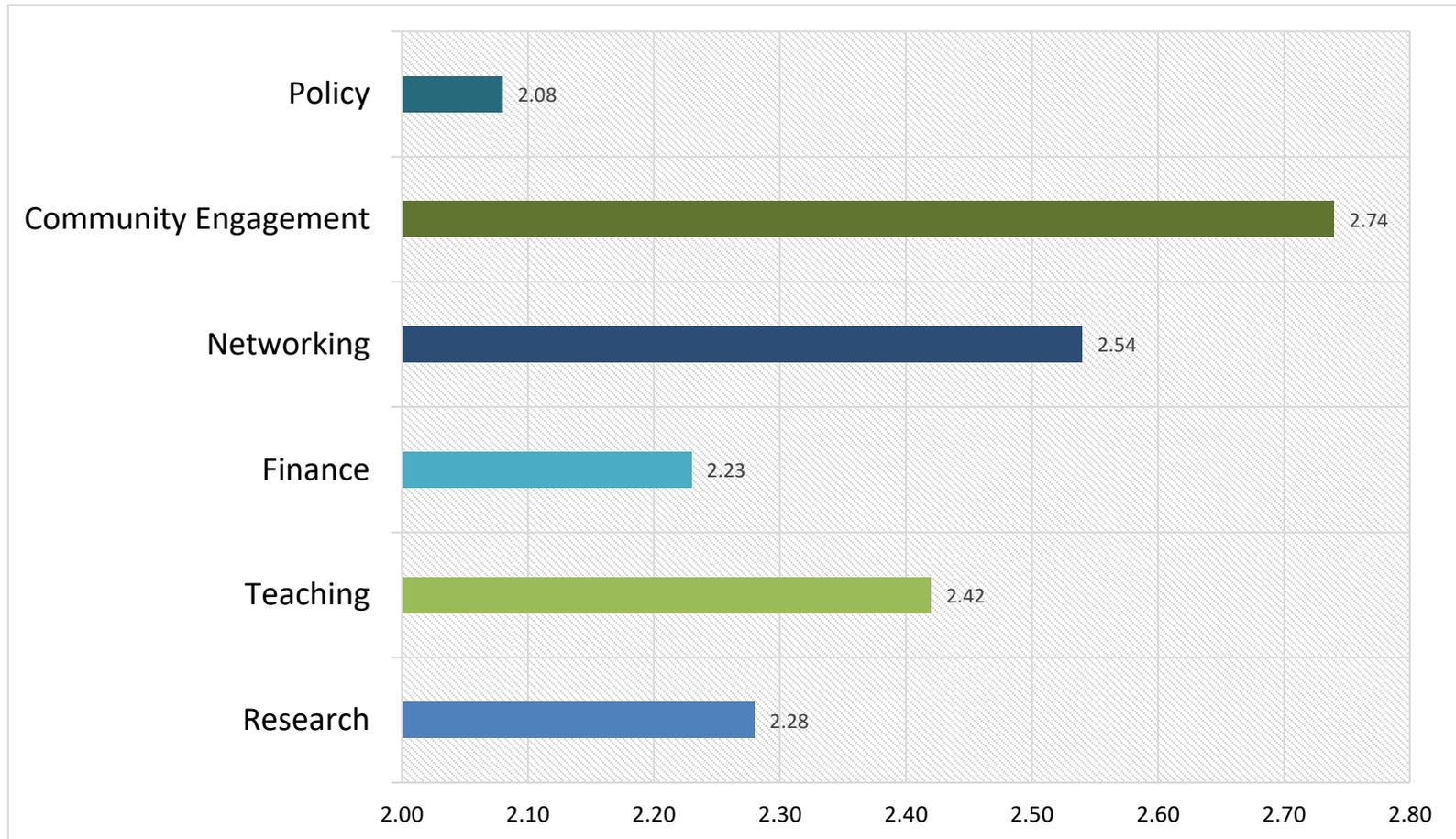


Figure 1. Government Support for Social Enterprise and Innovation

Higher Education

- Some universities embedded social enterprise and innovation as a mandatory module in their curriculum.
- Social enterprise and innovation modules were viewed positively by students and alternative routes for social entrepreneurship was available following completion of the module.
- Students supported to empathise with small businesses and that there is a growing demand for such courses.
- Barrier to the emergence of these courses were the lack of connection of the course to real-life entrepreneurship and innovation, especially between theory, practice and the marketplace.
- Results from the survey (Figure 2) reveal that there was a below average perception of the curricula available, with 82.2% rating it as average or poor.

Higher Education

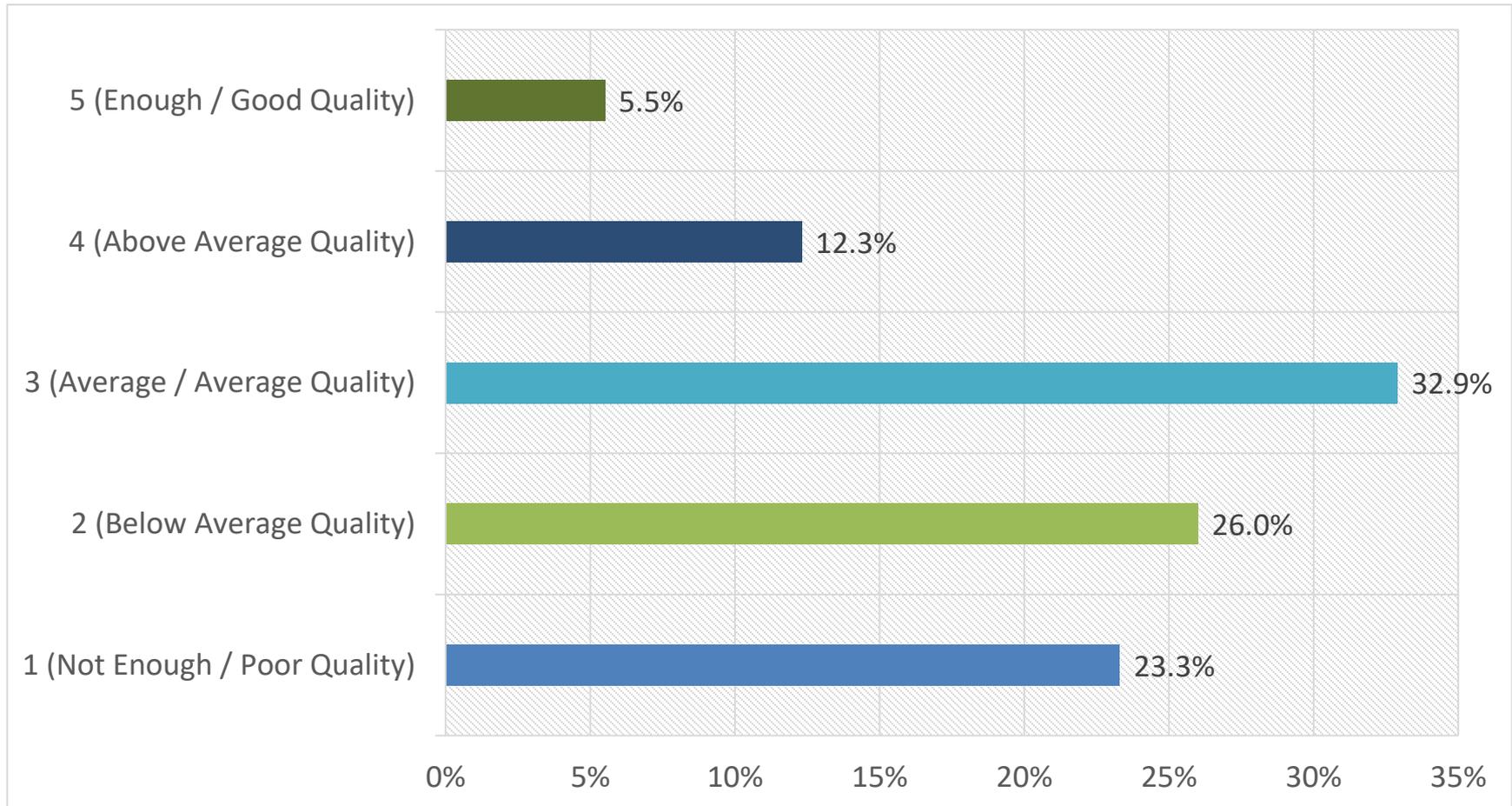


Figure 2. Mexican HE Curriculum for Social Enterprise and Innovation

Partnership and Collaboration

- Partnership and collaboration were a core aspect of developing the social enterprise and innovation ecosystem in Mexico.
- HEIs promote partnership approaches in the creation of university networks, including involvement in Red Emprendia that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship through a network of universities.
- This partnership approach enables stakeholders to connect, with one participant explaining that partnership approaches mean that most people in the ecosystem already know each other and work together.
- Survey participants reported that a common challenge in collaboration and community engagement was securing partnerships (26.0%).
- The British Council (2020) found that partnership and collaboration aids development of the social enterprise and innovation ecosystem.

Opportunities for Expansion

- Support for early stage enterprises (with innovation) were *often* linked to universities with programmes such as Tiger Tank and Ashoka U.
- Awards for social entrepreneurs for innovation contribute to promoting the social enterprise and innovation in Mexico.
- Participants noted that the growth in private companies sponsoring social or environmental challenges helps to promote social enterprises and social innovation in Mexico.
- This type of support is important as CSR) delivered by private companies, alongside philanthropic donations (or venture philanthropy) were shown to be important in both the BRICKS and SIHE reports.



Community Engagement

- Some courses focus on helping the community and innovating ideas that would support underrepresented communities on both national and global levels.
- In one of the universities, students worked on a project concerning coral reefs in the Caribbean – this emphasised that working on these social enterprise and innovation help students to see the inequalities.
- The programmes support student to complete 400 – 600 hours of community work, with 374.4 million hours completed by 780,000 students.
- These type of place-based, community embedded learning experiences (Elmes et al., 2012; Alden-Rivers et al., 2015) are central to developing high-quality curriculum to support social enterprises and innovation.
- This community work requirement can form an important part of any curriculum development or even extra-curricular activities for students centred on social enterprise and innovation.

Recommendations

Definitional Issues

Enhanced Policy
Frameworks

Funding

Improving
Community Links
and Awareness

New, Place-Based
Social Enterprise
and Innovation
Curriculum

Intra Higher
Education
Collaborations

Summary

- Adopting effective education curricula around social enterprise and innovation requires consistent definitions of each area.
- International partnership and collaboration programmes are very useful for improving the social enterprise and social innovation ecosystem and for the creation of opportunities for students.
- Universities need to engage in international work in order to share their practice and learn from best practice elsewhere.
- Collaboration between universities and other stakeholder groups is beneficial, with over one-quarter of respondents in our research arguing that securing partnerships was the biggest barrier to collaboration and community engagement.



Thank you
for listening

Any questions?

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