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ORGANIZED CHAOS: MAPPING THE DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

ABSTRACT

Over the last 20 years, social entrepreneurship has attracted the attention of researchers from a wide variety of disciplines which, in turn, has generated a large variety of understandings of the meaning of social entrepreneurship. This paper maps the existing definitions, using a citation map and cluster analysis methods. Studying 307 documents that contain social entrepreneurship definitions, the analysis reveals that - contrary to what has been commonly believed -there does, in fact, exist widespread consensus within the academic community on the definition and meaning of the term social entrepreneurship and it is primarily centred on the combination of social and financial goals, community ideals and innovation.

Keywords: social entrepreneurship, citation map, cluster analysis, social enterprise, social innovation, social entrepreneur

INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, the study of social entrepreneurship has attracted scholars from a variety of disciplines, including non-profit, ethics, corporate social responsibility, entrepreneurship and strategy, among others (Short et al., 2009), creating a vibrant community of members and a rich set of publications written from a plethora of perspectives. Along the way of this rapid growth, a number of different definitions for the term “social entrepreneurship” emerged and it has become common practice for scholars who study social entrepreneurship to claim that there is no common definition of the term (Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009). Though a wide array of definitions has been put forward, no single definition to date has been declared “the one”.

In light of the multiple disciplines that study social entrepreneurship, it makes sense that multiple definitions coexist. The aim of this paper is thus to use the existing divergent definitions of social entrepreneurship to create a map of what the distinct definitional spheres are, in order to provide an orientation for new and existing scholars of social entrepreneurship. It will enable scholars in the field to place themselves and their respective work, as well as to articulate new knowledge and ideas in a way that is directly aligned with the perspective they are coming from.

In 2009, Short et al., completed an extensive review on social entrepreneurship literature up until that time. Among a variety of astute observations, their study concluded that the majority of articles published on social entrepreneurship were conceptual in nature rather than empirical. As a result of these findings, the authors considered social entrepreneurship as a field to be in an “embryonic state” (Short et al., 2009, p.161). The authors of this review also concluded that social entrepreneurship was just starting to reach a broad audience (p. 164). From this “embryonic state”, academic interest in social entrepreneurship enjoyed massive pace of

growth between the years 2009 and 2015, one which bypassed its childhood years and propelled it straight into adolescence.

In describing the rise of an academic field, Hambrick and Chen (2008) identify three factors that contribute to its growth: legitimacy building, mobilization of resources and differentiation. These three major elements are key for the likelihood and speed of acceptance of an academic field and social entrepreneurship scholars have undertaken initiatives to strengthen all three. First, social entrepreneurship scholars have devoted great effort to building legitimacy and adhering to the norms and styles of adjacent, already established fields (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The creation in recent years of specific academic journals devoted to social entrepreneurship such as the *Social Enterprise Journal* and the *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*; the rapid growth of academic conferences in the area and the creation of research centres in prestigious universities and business schools have all contributed to increasing and establishing the legitimacy of the field. Second, at the same time that academics have set the basis for acquiring legitimacy for research on social entrepreneurship, numerous governments such as the UK, international organizations like Ashoka and important funders like the Skoll Foundation have mobilized major resources to support social entrepreneurs and diffuse the notion of social entrepreneurship across the world. The third factor, differentiation, is currently the least developed.

For a new field to emerge, it needs to differentiate itself from other existing fields (Hambrick & Chen, 2008) and this is achieved by claiming that the new phenomenon falls outside the scope of standing disciplines.

Auguste Comte (1798-1857), the father of positivism and the person who first coined the term “sociology”, set forth what he named the “hierarchy of sciences” (Martineu, 1896). Comte argued that the sciences progress through different stages of development from the bottom to the

top of the hierarchy. Sciences at the bottom of the hierarchy present no theory, a low level of generalization, a low level of consensus on theory, methods and significance of problems and lack of significant accumulation of knowledge, among other characteristics. In contrast, sciences at the top of the hierarchy, like astronomy or physics, are driven by highly developed theory, high levels of codification, a high level of consensus on theory, methods and significance of problems and the ability to use the theory to make verifiable predictions. Cole (1983) adds that, in addition to the differentiation between sciences at the top and at the bottom of the hierarchy, it is important to differentiate between two classes of knowledge: the core, or fully evaluated and universally accepted ideas and the research frontier.

The research frontier includes all research currently being conducted. From this pool of research, some studies will turn out to be insignificant, but a small number of ideas will stand the test of time and, through an evaluation process, will become part of the core. At the research frontier, therefore, significant and insignificant views, ideas and theories are intermingled and only time and intellectual development will progressively clarify the situation and help advance the field. Until it is developed, a field can experience different views and competing paradigms leading up to the point when one paradigm is widely accepted by the community. This paradigm agreement constitutes a prerequisite for the creation and survival of a certain research tradition.

Considering that social entrepreneurship research started its development in the academic arena in the late 1990s, it is still a fairly new area in the field of management sciences; for this reason, it is reasonable that there exist competing views, paradigms and theories. To support the growth and establishment of social entrepreneurship as a dedicated field, this study focuses on the definition of the key terms associated with the discipline.

Narrowing the focus to academic definitions of the terms “social entrepreneurship”, “social enterprise” and “social entrepreneur”, the paper presents a citation map that serves as the basis for the cluster analysis performed. The cluster analysis helps determine five different clusters, each of them corresponding to a way and tradition of understanding social entrepreneurship. Although previous studies have attempt to group definitions, none of them has done it in a structured and analytical way.

PREVIOUS CLASSIFICATIONS OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Social enterprises in a broader sense have been around for decades, some argue that even centuries. Boschee and McClurg (2008) mentions religious institutions, such as monasteries, that sold products such as wine, beer or cheese to sustain their operations as early as the twelfth century. It was not until the 1990s, however, that interest in the subject began to flourish in both mass media and practitioner journals, with academia following the trend soon after. With the creation of Ashoka, an international organization that is devoted to and supports social entrepreneurs, in the late 1980s and the first article specifically referring to social entrepreneurs written by Waddock and Post (1995) in North America and the appearance of a Charles Leadbeater’s report (1997) in Europe.

The first publications to capture the interest on social entrepreneurship were practitioner vehicles such as *Inc.* magazine (Gendron, 1996), *New Statesman* magazine (Young, 1997; Zadek & Thake, 1997) and *Across the Board* magazine (Boschee, 1995) and teaching cases such as the Harvard Business School case written by Gregory Dees (1994). In the academic sphere, interest in the area began in the late 1980s, using terms such as “policy entrepreneur” (N. C. Roberts &

King, 1987), “public entrepreneur” (Bellone & Goerl, 1992) and sometimes even “civic entrepreneur” (Henton, Melville, & Walesh, 1997). Mention of the term “social entrepreneurship” appeared as early as 1991, brought forth by scholars such as Waddock and Post (1995), but it was not until a piece in *Harvard Business Review* by Dees (1998) and the report of the Demos think tank written by Charles Leadbeater (1997) that the term reached a tipping point and truly took off in the public vernacular.

The field grew so rapidly that just a few years later, Johnson (2000) cited in excess of 10 different ways to conceptualize “social entrepreneurship” and more recently, Bacq and Janssen (2011) offered 39 different definitions. Precisely because of these constantly expanding distinct definitions and viewpoints, several authors have grouped the definitions in an attempt to organize, classify and synthesize the existing literature.

Dees and Anderson (2003), for example, distinguish four ways of understanding a social enterprise in terms of its organizational structure, their primary goal, the way these organizations distribute profit and their respective legal structure. These include for-profit social ventures, non-profit business ventures, socially responsible businesses and purely profit-motivated firms operating in the social sector. Following this trend, Alvord et al. (2004) group definitions into three categories: social entrepreneurship as a combination of commercial enterprises and social impact; social entrepreneurship as innovation for social impact without stressing the need for financial sustainability and, finally, social entrepreneurship as a way to catalyse social transformations.

In addition to grouping by form, there have also been scholars who specifically address the geographical variation in understanding the term. Kerlin (2006), for example, differentiates between European and US definitions, arguing that the latter are more focused on revenue

generation, while the former, the European conception, views social benefit as the primary driver. Bacq and Janssen (2011) also explored the nature of the respective economic systems and thus the evolution of social entrepreneurship within the respective regions and concluded that there is no significant difference between Europe and the US in terms of the underlying understanding of the term.

Other approaches include the work of Austin et al. (2006) who classify definitions as a range from broad to narrow. Broad definitions of social entrepreneurship refer to any type of innovative activity that creates social value, no matter whether it is developed in a for-profit or non-profit organization, or if the activity does or does not generate revenue. In contrast, narrow definitions understand social entrepreneurship as the application of market-based strategies within the non-profit sector, with the objective of generating revenues. In the same line of reasoning, Perrini (2006) talked about limited and extended definitions, while Light (2008) explored big and small-tent definitions.

Dorado (2006) opened the possibility that social entrepreneurial ventures may be of three types. Dorado proposed that could be non-profit organizations that use market-based strategies to finance their social service operations, double bottom line organizations or, finally, social entrepreneurial ventures that can also be understood as initiatives engaging multiple actors, from non-profits to for profits or government, to solve a social problem. Also in 2006, Mair and Martí grouped social entrepreneurship researchers into those that refer to social entrepreneurship as non-profit initiatives which use alternative funding strategies to support their social value creating activities; those that understand social entrepreneurship as commercial businesses engaged in cross-sector partnerships and, finally, a third group of researchers that view social entrepreneurship as a way of alleviating a social problem and thus catalysing social

transformation. Tracey and Phillips (2007) identify two additional conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship. For some authors, a social entrepreneurship focus is the creation of positive social change, no matter the structure or process used. However, for the other groups, social entrepreneurship achieves a social output by creating earned income strategies specifically.

Dacin et al. (2010) list a selection of 37 definitions of the term social entrepreneurship and group these definitions into five categories: (i) Social entrepreneurship as a process that includes both governmental and non-profit organizations operated using business principles; (ii) Social entrepreneurship as a way to name corporate social responsibility activities; (iii) Social entrepreneurship as the outcome of philanthropy; (iv) Innovation applied to social value generating activities and, finally, (v) Social entrepreneurship as economically sustainable ventures with a social mission. Nicholls (2010) also acknowledges the wide range of definitions existing in the field and groups them into five clusters where social entrepreneurship is understood as a new model for social change, a solution to state failures in welfare provision, a new market opportunity for businesses, a model of political transformation or a space for hybrid partnerships.

The list of classifications summarized above is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather offers representation of the fact that most authors recognize the need for clarity within the definitional debate. All authors acknowledge that there are multiple points of view and some have attempted to add clarity to the field by grouping and organizing the definitions. However, the discussion to date has not been exhaustive as each author has grouped the terms according to their own criteria and, in some cases, with considerable overlap with other authors' group proposals. Our paper is aimed at disentangling the definitional overlaps that exist.

METHODS

Identification of Papers

The search for definitions of social entrepreneurship starts by conducting a scan within the following article databases: Business Source Complete, Google Scholar, Emerald, JSTOR and ScienceDirect. Those databases contain all relevant journals in the area of business, management, finance and non-profit. The search was done in April 2015 and it was restricted to papers published in 2014. All articles that contained any of the terms “social entrepreneurship”, “social entrepreneur” or “social enterprise” were identified. The search resulted in 129 documents from a variety of journals. Only academic peer-reviewed articles were selected, thus book reviews and papers published in non-academic journals were not included. In addition, to ensure the quality of the chosen papers, we selected those papers published in highly ranked journals, this includes the top-5 business journals, that is: *The Academy of Management Annals*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management and Administrative Science Quarterly*; plus other highly ranked journals that tend to publish research on social entrepreneurship: *Organization Science*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, *International Small Business Journal*, *Journal of Small Business Management*, *Review of Managerial Sciences*, *Organization Science* and *Journal of Business Ethics*. By highly ranked journals we refer to journals in the first quartile (25% best) of Thompson Reuters ISI Web of Knowledge and 4* in the CABS ranking list. Results of the search offered 12 articles that are listed in Table 1 and constitute the initial point of our analysis.

Insert Table 1 Here

The idea of identifying only papers published in 2014 and then, based on those, track backwards which papers were cited has, from our point of view, different advantages. First, there is a difference between which definitions have been *published* and which definitions have been *used* in the field. We want to concentrate on the latter. Second, this method allows us to detect other type of published material such as books, websites or articles in magazines that would not appear in a standard search in an academic database but that are of high importance when trying to study the development of a field when its initial stages occur outside academia. Finally, this method eliminates the discretionary selection of papers that are necessary in the selection of papers for literature reviews. Usually, in this type of reviews the authors identify a set of papers by searching in the databases but a final manual selection has to be done to see if the paper really applies to the topic under study or not. The method proposed is structured and clear in that respect.

All papers whose main focus is social entrepreneurship or that refer to social entrepreneurs and/or social enterprises tend to include a paragraph explaining the author's understanding of social entrepreneurship, social enterprises or a social entrepreneur. This particular section constitutes the focus of our research.

For each of the papers, we identified the paragraph that refers to the definition or clarification of the term "social entrepreneurship", "social entrepreneur" or "social enterprise". Once that section was identified, we registered: (i) which were the definitions and authors cited by the paper in this

particular section and (ii) whether the paper provided its own definition. If there was a new definition identified, it was recorded for further analysis. This process was replicated until we located a paper that did not cite any other definition.

In this way, tracing backwards from the initial set of 2014 papers, 307 documents were identified. These documents include academic articles (154), working papers (30), books (85), non-academic articles (19) such as reports in press and magazines, webpages and organizations (19) such as Ashoka and the Centre for Social Innovation at Stanford University. Aside from the initial set of 12 papers, which, being published in 2014, have a lower chance of receiving a large number of citations, all the rest have been cited at least once by another paper in the definitional section. Figure 1 graphs the number of documents by publication year, differentiating by type of document.

Insert Figure 1 Here

It is important to note that not all 307 documents contain their own definition as some papers simply adopt another author’s definition. With this in mind, from the existing set of documents, we identified 140 definitions of the term “social entrepreneurship”, “social entrepreneur” or “social enterprise.”¹

¹ A list of all definitions can be requested from the authors. These definitions have not been included in the paper due to space limitations.

Although this is the largest list of definitions that has been compiled to date, it is not possible to affirm that all definitions ever published on social entrepreneurship appear in the list. Three reasons hinder the possibility of making an exhaustive list. First, the search does not include articles from 2015 onward, so there may be articles currently in press whose definition is not included. Second, the list includes all definitions that are identified in papers, working papers, book chapters and non-academic documents that have been accessible, which represents 78% of the 307 documents. It has not been possible to gain access to 22% of the documents, which are mostly books, therefore the process of identifying the definition has not been possible in such cases. Consequently, those definitions are not included in the list. Finally, the search was done on the databases that cover most of the journals in management, and was restricted to the most important and influential journals in the field, though we do recognize that there might be journals and papers that are not included in these databases. In contrast, we have chosen to include working papers and non-academic documents, which are typically omitted from literature reviews, but that are important in a field that is relatively new. The objective of this piece of work is to find whether there is a consensus in the definition of social entrepreneurship in this nascent field considering, among other factors, the number of citations a certain definition receives. Hence, recent papers are less significant than those that are older, so if any recent paper is missing, there will not be a significant variation of results. From each of the definitions identified, we record a set of characteristics that are presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 Here

Citation Map

A citation analysis focuses on the citations of the author and journal based on the premise that citations provide an indication of the scientific interaction between researchers. It is assumed that researchers from a similar field that share an analogous scientific conception cite each other more heavily than authors in other areas (Garfield, 1979). Therefore, a citation analysis allows the identification of clusters of similar researchers. Kraus et al. (2014) have been the only scholars to date to conduct a bibliometric analysis in the area of social entrepreneurship. However, their approach completely differs from present research as they use all the references of each of the selected papers to identify five different topics or areas of research in the field of social entrepreneurship. In contrast, we restrict our research only to the papers that are cited in the definition section to identify groups of definitions that reflect a certain understanding of the concept in question.

Once all papers related to definitions were identified, our next step was to build a 307 x 307 matrix with values 0/1. The first column (i) and the first row (j) contain the list of documents with name of the author and year. Cell (i, j) is populated by 1 if paper “i” cites paper “j” and 0 if the paper does not cite “j”. The matrix is not symmetric, entry (i, j) is not equal to entry (j, i) since it is possible that paper “i” cites paper “j” but paper “j” does not cite paper “i”. To build the citation map we used the program NodeXL, frequently used for social network analysis. Figure 2a is the representation of the complete citation map obtained where the x-axis is the publication year and the y-axis is the in-degree of each of the papers that is, the number of citations received. The complete map contains 307 documents that are linked by 962 unidirectional links, each of them representing one document that cites another one always only in the social enterprise definition section. The y-axis represents the in-degree, that is, the number

of citations each document. The shape of the nodes differentiates the type of source: academic papers are represented as a disk, solid squares are books, spheres are working papers, solid diamonds are non-academic articles such as documents coming from magazines and newspapers are finally solid triangles and organizations such as Ashoka are in blue. Colour indicates the origin of the papers: black papers are from North American authors and dark grey from European authors, while light grey are the rest.

Insert Figure 2a Here

Figure 2a represents the complete citation map. The average number of citations for each of the documents is 3.14. From the citation map, we can see that from 2006 onward most documents are either academic articles or books. In contrast, before 2006, the source of the documents is much more heterogeneous. Usually older papers seem to receive a higher number of citations than more recently published papers, therefore, it is not clear if the high number of citations of older papers is due to the fact that the definition those papers present is highly popular or if it is more of a timing effect. In order to eliminate this time effect and somehow isolate the popularity of the definition cited, we ran a regression with the number of citations a paper receives (in-degree) as the dependent variable and time as the independent variable. Control variables such as the 5-year impact factor of the journal where the article was published, the type of document (dummies were created for each document type generating four variables named *Non-academic*, *Organization*, *Paper* and *Working Paper*), the origin of the first author (dummies were created for *Europe* and *North America*), whether the documents contains the authors' own definition

(*Own Definition*) and the number of citations the document contains (*Out-Degree*) are also included in the regression. The results of the regression are presented in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 Here

It can be observed from the table that only the variable *Year* and the variable *Own Definition* have a significant effect at 95% confidence level ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$) on the number of citations a paper receives. The coefficient of the variable *Year* is negative indicating that, everything else constant, an extra year decreases the number of citations the paper receives. Based on those results, there is evidence that there is an effect of time on the number of citations, not related to the popularity of the definition contained in a particular document. For this reason, we created the citation map discounting the time effect, illustrated in Figure 2b. For clarity, in Figure 2b we have eliminated the edges and show only the documents that received more than the average number of citations thus, 4 or more citations.

Insert Fig.2b Here

Among the most highly cited, a number of papers stand out. This is the case of the Stanford working paper of Gregory Dees (1998) “The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship”, the paper by Austin et al. (2006), published in *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, the article from Dees in

1998 in *Harvard Business Review*, the report of the Demos think-tank written by Leadbeater in 1997 and the paper of Alvord et al. (2004), in the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*.

Cluster Analysis

With 140 different definitions of the terms “social entrepreneurship”, “social entrepreneur” and “social enterprise” coming from the 307 documents analysed, the next natural step was to classify and group them in order to understand the differences. One of the most commonly used tools in social network analysis is cluster analysis. The primary purpose of cluster analysis is to group the items, whether they are people, in the case of social network analysis, or papers, in our case, in a way that brings together items that belong to the same cluster which are more similar to each other than those in other clusters (Newman, 2003). In this case, the clusters are constructed based on the number of citations and papers that belong to the same cluster tend to cite the same authors. There are several algorithms that facilitate the division of networks into subnetworks or clusters and algorithms can range from simple to complex. Simple methods such as graph partitioning, hierarchical clustering and k-means clustering are adequate for small networks like the one we are concerned with, but the disadvantage is that the author needs to provide the number of clusters or its given size in advance (Murata, 2010). Hierarchical clustering, for example, was used by Hopcroft et al. (2004) to divide a citation map similar to the one we are concerned with, however, in our case this method is not adequate as the confusion that dominates the definitional debate makes it difficult to determine the number of clusters a-priori. It is therefore desirable to use methods that have the ability of detecting the number of clusters based on optimization of some characteristics. The algorithms then are more complex

and can be divided into two main groups: algorithms that use link removal methods and algorithms that optimize modularity (Leon Danonet al., 2005).

Algorithms that use link removal methods, also called divisive algorithms, are based on the idea that a way to partition a network into clusters is to detect the edges that connect vertices from different communities and remove them until the subnetworks are no longer connected. One of the best known divisive algorithms is the one created by Girvan and Newman (2002). Girvan and Newman algorithm is based on the concept of edge betweenness that is the number of shortest paths between all vertex pairs that run along a certain edge. Edges that link two clusters have a large value of edge betweenness. This type of algorithm is not appropriate for our analysis.

Although the algorithm was designed for social network analysis, for the citation network we are concerned with unidirectional links as a document in our network that has high betweenness means that the paper receives a great deal of citations, but also that the paper cites many other authors thus connecting two or more communities. In our dataset, detecting clusters in this way will separate communities into “papers that cite” and “papers that are cited”, which is not the objective of this research.

Algorithms that optimize modularity, like the Clauset-Newman-Moore algorithm, (Clauset et al., 2004) are frequently used for large datasets because of their rapid performance, but they also work well with small networks. Modularity measures when the division is a good one by comparing the fraction of within-community edges from what would be expected from a randomized network. The results of the cluster analysis using the Clauset-Newman-Moore algorithm are shown in Figure 3. Figure 3 shows the citation map, for clarity, where only those references that have been cited more than the average citation have been included.

Insert Figure 3 Here

The Clauset-Newman-Moore clustering algorithm divides the documents into five differentiated clusters based on the connections among the different documents. In addition to the cluster division, the shapes of the vertices of Figure 3 represent the geographical origin of the first author. Triangles indicate documents whose first author's affiliation is a North American institution while squares indicate documents whose first author's affiliation is a European institution. Circles represent documents from other parts of the world such as the article of Mort et al. (2003) present in Cluster 5, where all three authors are from the School of Management of the University of Queensland, Australia or the article in Cluster 3 written by Prabhu (1999), from the Indian Institute of Management at Bangalore, India.

Cluster Labelling

Once the five citation clusters were determined, we explored the definitions of *social entrepreneurship*, *social enterprise* and *social entrepreneur* that belong to each of the clusters to identify similarities and common patterns. This exploration allowed us to assign a label to each of the clusters. The analysis of the definitions was done using the content analysis program Atlas.ti.

First, using a sub-sample of definitions and based on the literature review performed, the three authors agreed on a list of codes that reflect the differences between definitions. Second, three independent researchers, two of the authors plus a research assistant, codified a sub-sample of definitions to assess the appropriateness of the codes, to refine some of them and to acquire some training on the codification process. Once the code list was fine-tuned, we proceeded with the codification of all definitions. Finally, inter-code reliability was assessed calculating with SPSS the Cohen's kappa parameter which was 0.88 confirming the reliability of the codification process (Lombard, et al, 2002). The codes used can be grouped into six categories:

1. **Type of definition:** Codifies whether the definition corresponds to the term *social entrepreneurship*, *social entrepreneur* or *social enterprise*.
2. **Social objective:** Includes a reference to the social mission of the organization or of the entrepreneur. This category includes codes such as *social objective*, *social problem*, *alleviating poverty*, *creating social value* or *raising awareness*.
3. **Business:** This category encompasses codes like *economic risk*, *market-based strategies* or *production of goods and services*.
4. **Social and economic relationship:** Codes in this category refer to the relationship between the economic and social objectives in social enterprises. Some definitions underline that the primary goal of a social entity is the social mission rather than the profit, while others stress the importance of the profit-making activities to ensure the long term financial sustainability of the organization. The first case would be codified using the code *social first*, while the latter would be codified as *sustainability*.

5. **Entrepreneurship:** This category comprises codes that point to the entrepreneurial orientation of the organization or person; some examples of codes in this category are *innovation or identification and exploitation of opportunities*.
6. **Organizational Type:** Codes in this category refer to the legal form of the social organization or the type of stakeholders. *Cooperative* is one of the most prominent codes of this category.

The purpose of the codification process was to uncover similar patterns for each of the defined clusters. Table 4 shows the top five codes for each of the clusters.

Insert Table 4 Here

As can be observed in Table 4, around 50% of all codes appear within the top five. The first cluster contains many definitions of the term social entrepreneur, with a focus on solving or alleviating social problems and stresses the double objective, social and financial, of socially entrepreneurial ventures and the ability of the entrepreneur to mobilize the necessary resources. We decided to label this cluster as the *Social & Financial Cluster*.

Cluster 2 is mainly composed of European authors that define the term social enterprise. Their definitions include references to the role of innovation, the production of products and services and the need to bear some economic risk to benefit the community. The definition given by the European Research Network on Social Entrepreneurship (EMES) plays an important role, driven by the presence of EMES in the cluster. Papers such as Defourny & Nyssens (2008), Borzaga & Santuari (2000) or Spear (2006) belong also to that cluster. Not surprisingly, Defourny, Nyssens,

Borzaga and Spear belong to the EMES association. Also relevant in this cluster is the paper by Nicholls (2009). Based on the above description, Cluster 2 is named *Community Cluster*.

Different from the previous clusters, Cluster 3 is not focused on a specific term. In Cluster 3 definitions of the terms social enterprise, social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneur are intertwined and definitions are focused on the role of innovation, the exploration and exploitation of opportunities to create social value. Financial performance is also important, but taking into account that financial performance is secondary as the social impact comes first. Highly cited authors in this cluster are Leadbeater (1997), the paper from Thompson et al. (2000), Shaw & Carter (2007) or Zahra et al. (2008). This cluster is called *Innovation Cluster*.

Cluster 4 contains definitions centred on change, innovation and sustainability to create social value. Popular documents in this cluster are Austin et al. (2006); Dacin, Dacin & Tracey (2011), Emerson (2003) or Reis & Clohesy (2001). This cluster can be called *Sustainability Cluster*.

Finally, Cluster 5 is called the *Change Cluster*, as it contains definitions that accentuate the application of entrepreneurial behaviour to raise public awareness about social problems and to promote change with a critical ethical component. Definitions given by Waddock & Post (1991), Roberts & Woods (2005) or Mort et al. (2003) belong to this cluster.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

We have built the citation map and identified the different clusters to answer the question of what are the different conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship and its adjacent terms, social enterprise and social entrepreneur. The number of citations is a commonly accepted proxy for agreement. It thus follows that to answer the question of whether there is a consensus in the field,

it is relevant to consult Figure 4 as it depicts the cumulative number of citations each of the defined clusters have received over time.

Insert Figure 4 Here

As we can see in Figure 4, *Social & Financial Cluster* far exceeds the number of citations received by *Community Cluster* and *Innovation Cluster*, which have a similar number of citations. *Sustainability Cluster* and *Change Cluster* are cited much less.

Based on our findings, a possible definitional pattern emerges. If the tendency continues in the same way, the pattern that emerges is that *Sustainability Cluster* and the *Change Cluster* will eventually be a niche and most academic researchers will agree on a definition that is a combination of *Social&Financial*, *Community* and *Innovation Clusters*. The findings show that there is a certain tendency to abandon the definition of social entrepreneurship in terms of sustainability, change, social problems and public awareness; and instead frame social entrepreneurship in terms of the ability to mix social goals and financial performance (*Social&Financial Cluster*), the production of goods and services for the benefit of the community (*Community Cluster*) and innovation and the exploration of opportunities to generate social value (*Innovation Cluster*).

In wrapping up these findings, it is important to note the regional differences that have emerged in our study, summarized in Table 5 below.

Insert Table 5 Here

In 2006, Kerlin's paper examined the distinct conceptualizations of the term social entrepreneurship between Europe and North America. Though Kerlin did find distinctions between the regions, later researchers tackling a similar question concluded that the differences appear less and less prevalent with time (Bacq & Janssen, 2011). In Table 5, we observe that the *Community Cluster* does still prevail with European authors, but the rest of the groups, and specifically the *Social & Financial Cluster* and the *Innovation Cluster*, which are the other big groups, have authors from both sides of the Atlantic. One of the distinctions of the *Community Cluster*, where the majority of European authors appear is that there is an emphasis on community benefit, which does not clearly appear in any other cluster.

In addition, the clusters that the North American authors seem to favour (*Entrepreneur, Sustainability* and *Change Clusters*), do focus on entrepreneurship and its associated characteristics. The *Change Cluster*, the one that focused on societal changes and ethical progress, does not see a high frequency of European authors. These observations lead us to conclude that though the regional distinctions are still somewhat prevalent, specifically in the spheres of traditional entrepreneurship and community engagement, the overall distinctions between the regions are becoming less prevalent.

Though this study provides critical insights for understanding and defining social entrepreneurship, we have also identified some limitations that represent future research potential. Despite having followed a rigorous methodological procedure for selecting previous work and that the inclusion criteria were clearly defined, we acknowledge that we could not have captured every single definition of social entrepreneurship that exists. Due to new articles on

social entrepreneurship constantly emerging and due to access issues, some definitions might still be missing. Notwithstanding, we believe our approach has covered a wide spectrum of studies, including the seminal works that laid the theoretical background for the study of social entrepreneurship, as well as recent trends in the conceptualization and understanding of this field of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The intention behind this study was to unify and further grow the field of social entrepreneurship by mapping the distinct understandings of the key concepts that have emerged. What we uncovered through our investigation is that there is more unification than is commonly perceived and the cluster analysis allowed us to not only identify the five main definitional groups, but also to highlight the fastest growing one (*Social & Financial Cluster*), which appears to be growing at a steady pace, as well as the two that follow it (*Community* and *Innovation* clusters). As this forecast relies on the past behaviour of each cluster and the observation of the trend in recent years, we suggest that this study can set the basis for future investigations that continue to confirm how definitional groups evolve over time as a consequence of new trends in the field of social entrepreneurship.

The paper contributes to the existing literature on social entrepreneurship by clarifying the different types of definitions that have been used in the field and which ones are more popular. The purpose of this paper is not to say that one definition is better than other, neither that is necessary to find a one only definition to which all scholars agree. In contrast, the paper wants to stress the beauty of the variety that comes from different disciplines and understandings to

promote openings for further discussion and for extending theory building beyond its own borders.

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Zahra, S. A., Rawhouser, H. N., Bhawe, N., Neubaum, D. O., & Hayton, J. C. (2008). Globalization of social entrepreneurship opportunities. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, 2(2), 117-131.

TABLES

Table 1: Initial set of papers

Paper

Anderson, S. E., Coffey, B. S., & Dixon-Fowler, H. (2014). The Empty Bowls Project: Creating, Leading, and Sustaining a Social Enterprise. *Entrepreneurship: Theory & Practice*, 38(5), 1237-1245.

Battilana, J., & Lee, M. (2014). Advancing Research on Hybrid Organizing – Insights from the Study of Social Enterprises. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), 397- 441.

Besharov, M., & Smith, W.K. (2014). Multiple Institutional Logics in Organizations: Explaining their Varied Nature and Implications. *Academy of Management Review*, 39(3), 364-381.

Costanzo, L.A., Vurro, C., Foster, D., Servato, F., & Perrini, F. (2014). Dual-Mission Management in Social Entrepreneurship: Qualitative Evidence from Social Firms in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 52(4), 655-677.

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, 363-376

Kraus, S., Filser, M., O'Dwyer, M., & Shaw, E. (2014). Social Entrepreneurship: An exploratory citation analysis. *Review of Managerial Sciences*, 8, 275-292.

Kroeger, A., & Weber, C. (2014). Developing a Conceptual Framework for Comparing Social Value Creation. *Academy of Management Review*, .39(4), 513-540.

Miles, M.P., Verreynne, M-L. & Luke, B. (2014). Social Enterprises and the Performance Advantages of a Vincentian Marketing Orientation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 23, 549-556.

Nicolopoulou, K. (2014). Social Entrepreneurship between Cross-Currents: Toward a Framework for Theoretical Restructuring of the Field. *Journal of Small Business Management* 52(4), 678-702.

Sarason, Y., De Tienne, D.R., & Bentley, C. (2014). Wham'O's Offer to Buy Sprig Toys: Selling In or Selling Out? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 38(4), 959-972.

Stevens, R., Moray, N., & Bruneel, J. (2014). The Social and Economic Mission of Social Enterprises: Dimensions, Measurement, Validation and Relation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*.

Zahra, S.A., Newey, L.R., & Li, Y. (2014). On the Frontiers: The Implications of Social Entrepreneurship for International Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 38(1), 137-158

Table 2: Variables registered for each of the documents

<i>Data</i>	<i>Description</i>
Paper	
In Degree	Number of times a paper has been cited by other papers in the definition section.
Out Degree	Number of papers that a paper cites in the definition section.
Author	
Name	Name of the authors.
Affiliation	Affiliation of the first author.
Country	Country where the university/affiliation of the first author is located.
Publication	
Type of document	Academic paper, working paper, non-academic document, organization or book.
Journal	Name of the journal in case the document is an academic paper.
Impact factor	Five year JCR impact factor of the journal if it has one.
Year	Year of publication
Definition	
Number of definitions	Number of own definitions of the terms “social entrepreneurship”, “social entrepreneur” or “social enterprise” that appear in the document (0,1,2, or 3).
Type of definition	Whether the paper contains its own definition and if the definition is about “social entrepreneurship”, “social entrepreneur” or “social enterprise”.
Definition	Definition of the term “social entrepreneurship”, “social entrepreneur” or “social enterprise”.

Table 3: Results of the Linear Regression

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Inferior 95%</i>	<i>Superior 95%</i>
Interception	365.38	0.000	168.69	562.06
Year	-0.182	0.000	-0.280	-0.083
Non-academic	-1.326	0.270	-3.686	1.035
Organization	-1.428	0.210	-3.666	0.810
Paper	-0.715	0.349	-2.214	0.785
Working paper	-0.536	0.576	-2.422	1.350
5-year impact factor	0.168	0.288	-0.143	0.478
Europe	0.513	0.565	-1.241	2.266
North-America	0.627	0.485	-1.137	2.392
Own Definition	2.948	0.000	1.827	4.069
Out-Degree	0.020	0.687	-0.079	0.119

Table 4: Top 5 codes for each of the clusters.

CLUSTER 1		CLUSTER 4	
Code	Freq.	Code	Freq.
Social entrepreneur	14,1%	Sustainability	21,1%
Social problems	8,1%	Change	15,8%
Resource allocation	7,1%	Innovation	10,5%
Social & financial	7,1%	Social value	10,5%
Social first	6,1%	Entrepreneurial behavior	5,3%
Total	42,4%	Total	63,2%

CLUSTER 2		CLUSTER 5	
Code	Freq.	Code	Freq.
Social enterprise	11,9%	Change	20,0%
Production of goods & services	7,5%	Social problems	15,0%
Innovation	6,0%	Raising public awareness	10,0%
Benefit community	6,0%	Ethics	5,0%
Economic risk	6,0%	Entrepreneurial behavior	5,0%
Total	37,3%	Total	55,0%

CLUSTER 3	
Code	Freq.
Innovation	13,2%
Social first	13,2%
Explore and exploit opportunities	10,5%
Social & financial	10,5%
Social value	10,5%
Total	57,9%

Table 5: Geographic origin of the documents per cluster

	Europe	North America	Asia	Oceania
<i>Social & Financial Cluster</i>	36%	62%	0%	3%
<i>Community Cluster</i>	79%	21%	0%	0%
<i>Innovation Cluster</i>	55%	34%	3%	7%
<i>Sustainability Cluster</i>	23%	77%	0%	0%
<i>Change Cluster</i>	8%	69%	8%	15%

FIGURES

Figure 1: Number of documents by Publication Year (307 documents in total)

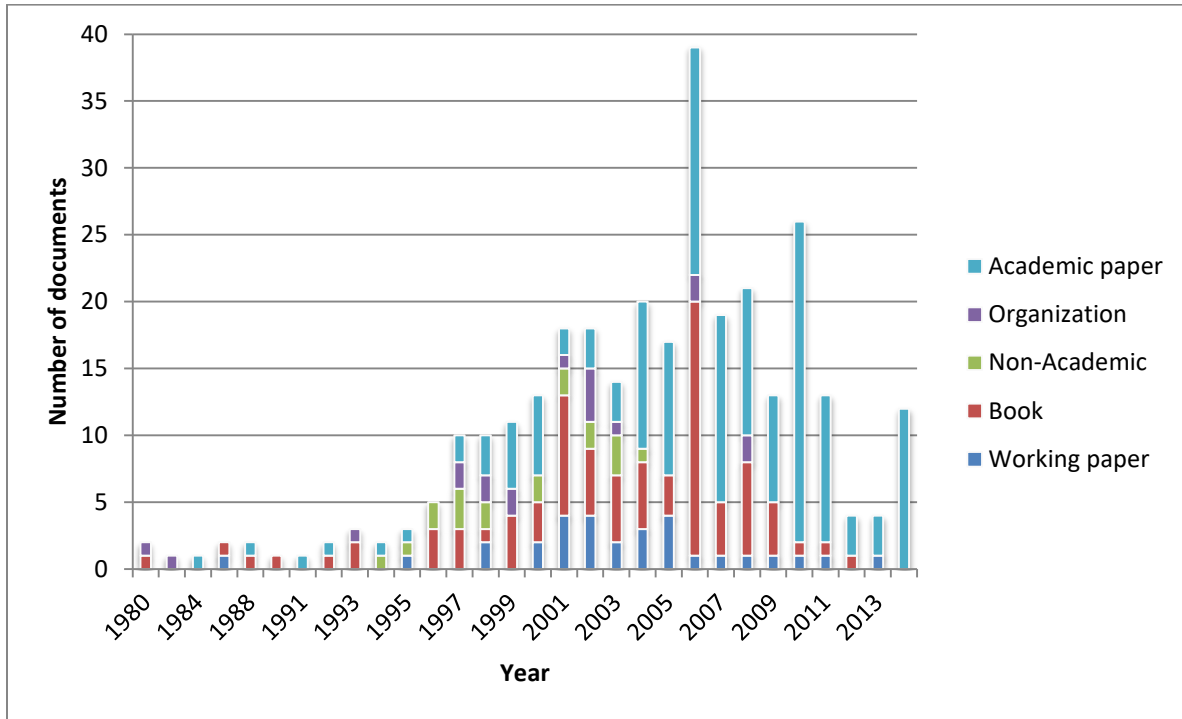


Figure 2a: Complete citation map

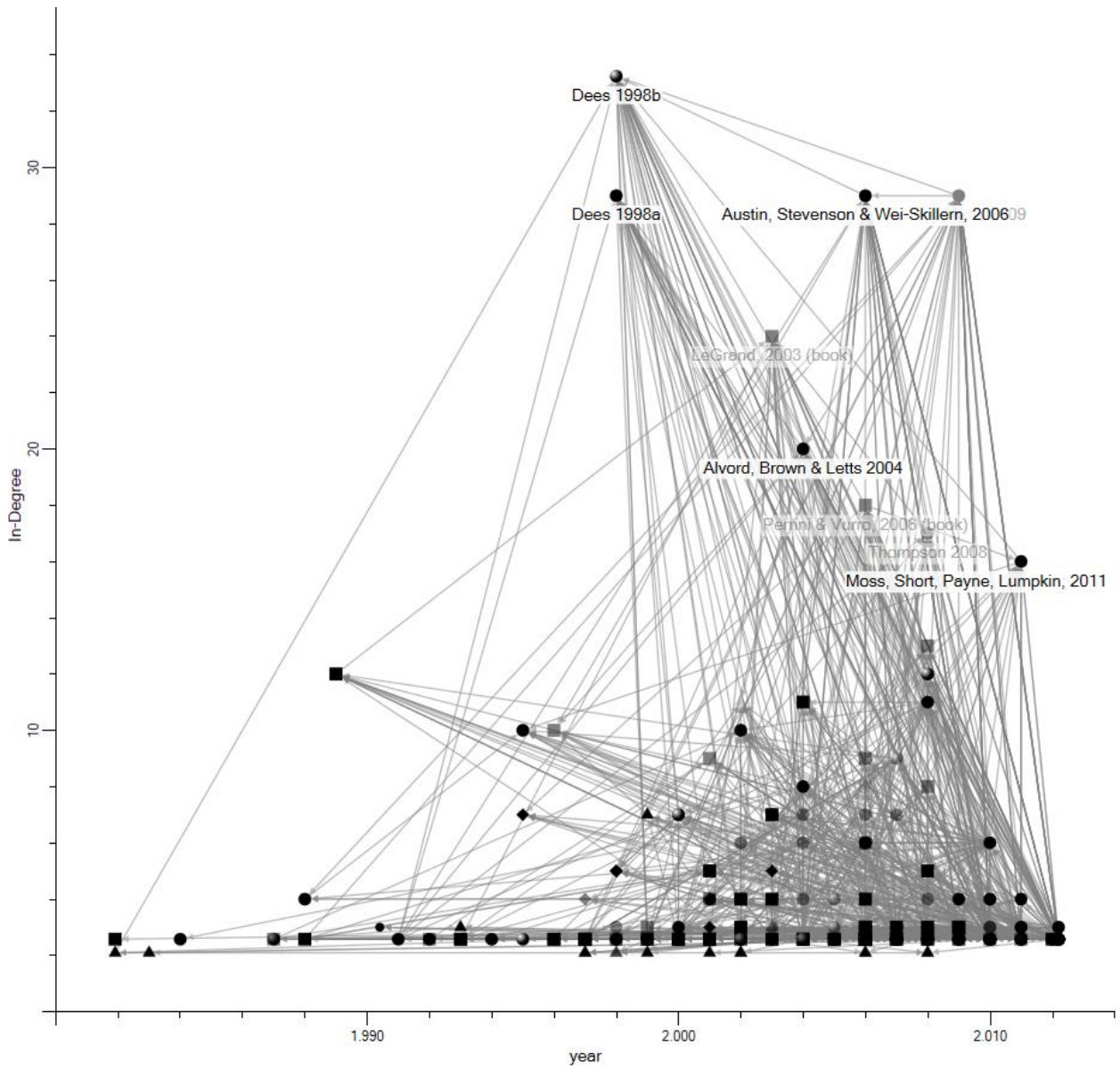


Figure 2b: Citation map only with papers cited more than average (time effect discounted)

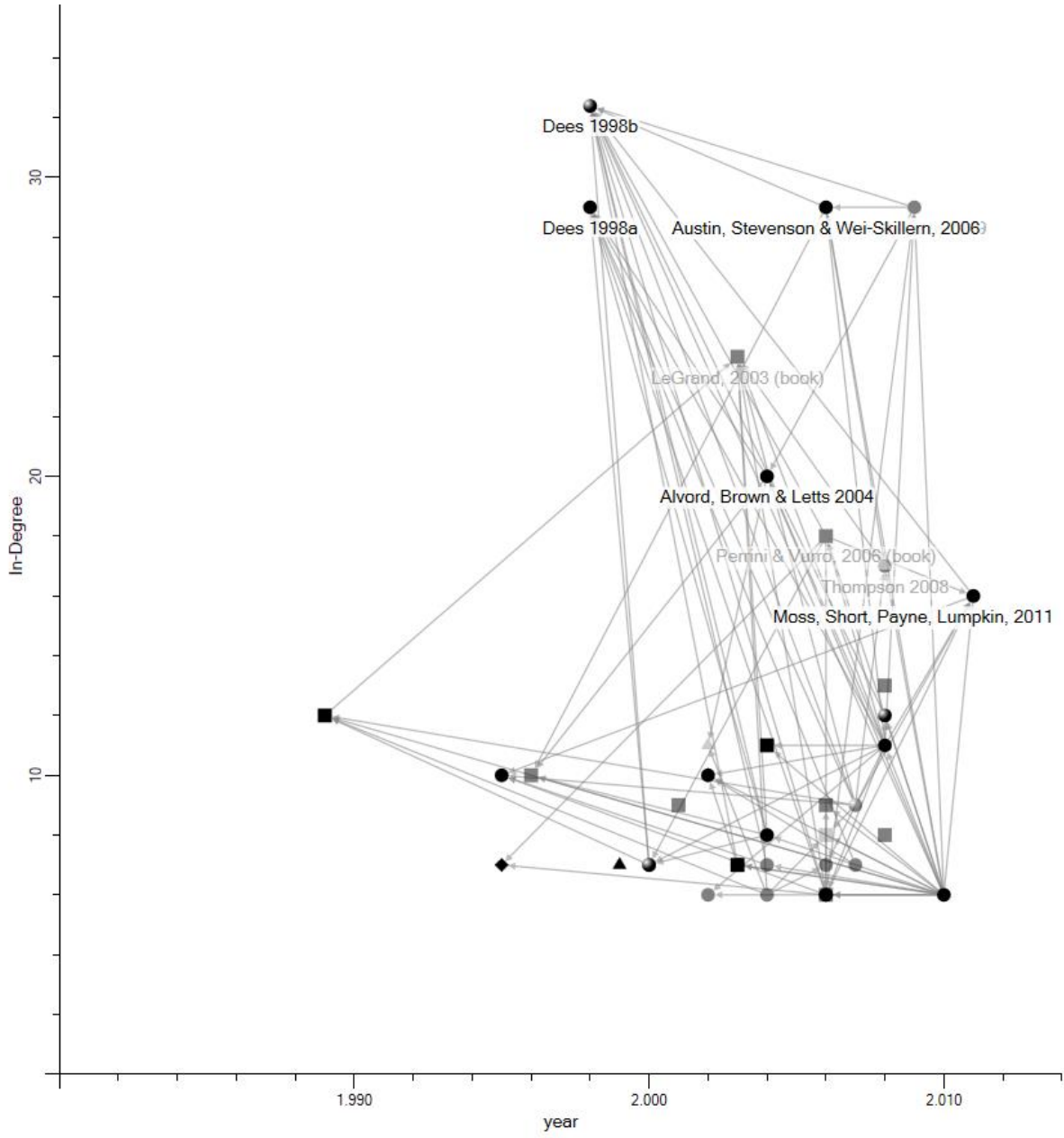


Figure 3: Complete Clustering Results

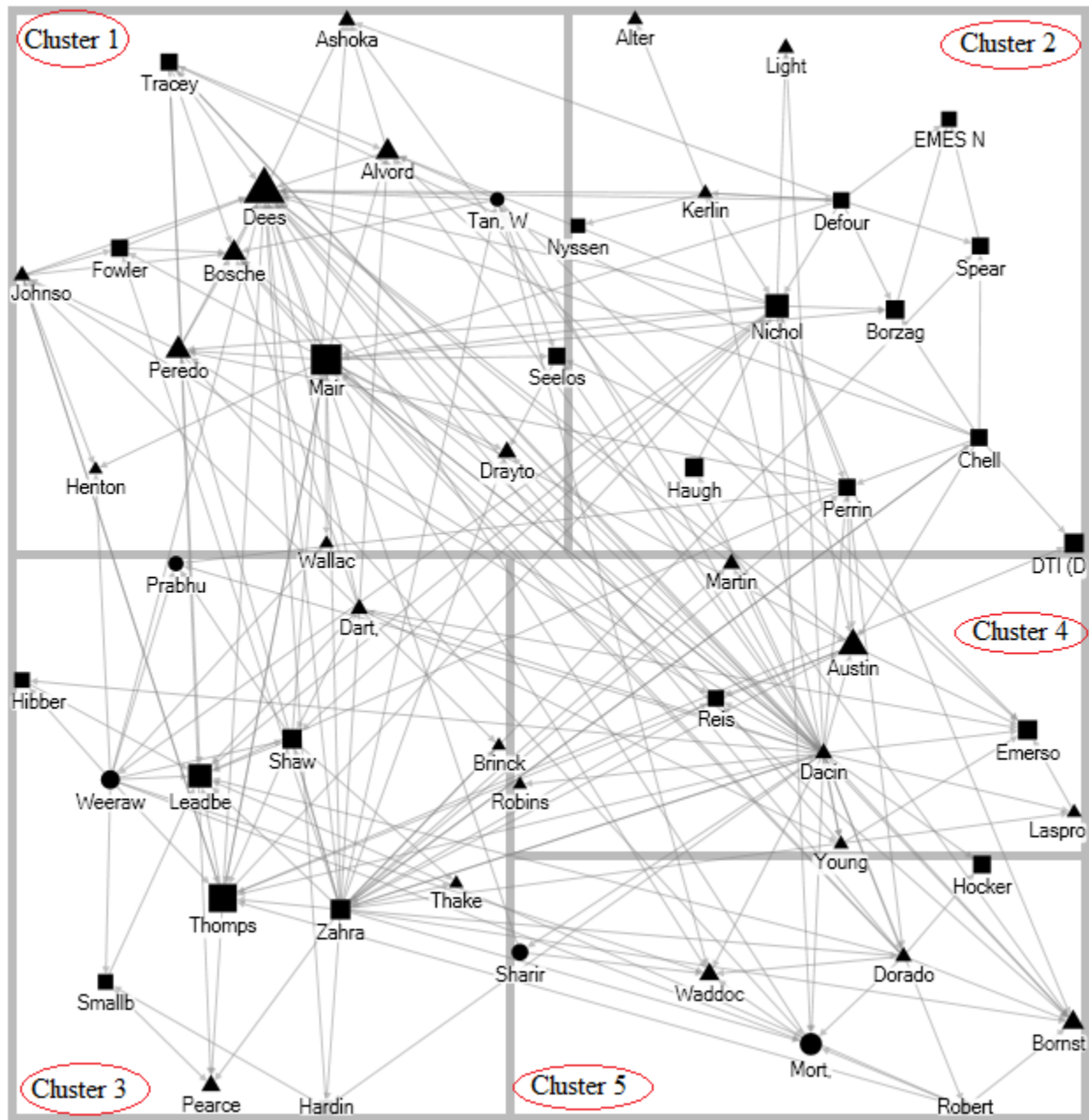


Figure 4: Cumulative number of citations of each cluster over time

