





## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Graduate employability in Ghana: embedding social enterprise skills within the higher education framework

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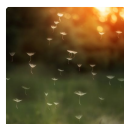
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## Abstract

Levels of unemployment and environmental challenges make social entrepreneurship and social enterprise very important for the sustainability of society. Higher education has played a fundamental role in driving entrepreneurship and innovation in local, national, regional, and global contexts. The authors of this article explore the state of the legislative framework in Ghana, as well as social enterprise education, stakeholder engagement, models and challenges. The methodology applied for this paper is concept mapping, enabling the critical exploration of the relevance of social enterprise in the context of higher education, and demonstrating how it could practically serve as a panacea to rising youth unemployment. This research concludes by making a case for including social enterprise in the higher education curriculum.

## Keywords

Ghana, Higher Education, Social Enterprise, Youth Unemployment



This article is included in the [Quality Education for All](#) gateway.

## Open Peer Review

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## Introduction

Based on existing academic and policy literature on social enterprise, the authors of this paper explore how social enterprise skills are an important factor in tackling youth unemployment. To begin with, the paper sets out the current outlying problems in Ghana from a social and economic perspective. Following this, the authors discuss the issues and debates of social entrepreneurship and skills within the higher education context in Ghana. The paper examines fundamental cornerstones of social enterprise in a higher education context. This study is based on previous literature on this subject (Halsall *et al.*, 2021; Halsall *et al.*, 2020; Hyams-Ssekasi *et al.*, 2019; Hyams-Ssekasi & Caldwell, 2018; Oberoi *et al.*, 2021; Snowden *et al.*, 2021; Snowden *et al.*, 2021).

### Ghana's current underlying economic and social problems

Youth unemployment is considered a major challenge at the global level. According to the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) report for 2020](#), the global youth unemployment rate stood at 13.6%. The report further indicates that, by the end of June 2021, young people were hit with mass unemployment due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The effects of youth unemployment due to the pandemic were highly pronounced in lower-income economies. Given this troubling global scenario, the 2021 World Employment and Social Outlook report has predicted a 5.7% rate in global unemployment by the end of 2022, and that in absolute terms, nearly 205 million youth will be rendered unemployed globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The global economic implication is that many lower-income countries are likely to face economic challenges since most of the economically active population falls within the youth age bracket. The [ILO report for 2021](#) put the unemployment rate among youth in Ghana at 12%, with more than 50% underemployed. These figures show that Ghana's youth unemployment rate surpasses the overall youth unemployment rates in Sub-Saharan African countries in 2020 at 7.8% and 5.8% worldwide (ILO, 2020a). The dire socio-economic consequences associated with high youth unemployment calls for further research to proffer alternative solutions to the myriad challenges posed by the problem.

Like any other country in the world, Ghana has been grappling with several social and economic problems. Poverty, unemployment, poor social amenities, and related socio-economic challenges explain the migration from villages into towns and migration from Ghana to other countries for 'greener pastures' (Smith & Darko, 2014). Private investors and the government pay little or no attention to social problems because of the low financial rewards for most of these social problems. Budgetary constraints also limit their ability to tackle these problems (Dalberg, 2011). Unemployment and joblessness, poverty incidence, income inequality, and the quantity and quality of jobs are essential indices of an economy's health. Ghana's employment growth has lagged behind its economic development (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng, 2015). Ghana has a dearth of employment possibilities, making the transition from schooling or

job losses to employment extremely difficult (Affum-Osei *et al.*, 2019; Nyarko *et al.*, 2014). Unemployment in Ghana has reached worrisome levels, with the youth bearing the brunt of the burden (Affum-Osei *et al.*, 2019).

Presently in Ghana, about 230,000 people seek employment each year, for which the formal economy can offer about 4,600 job – approximately 2% (ISSER, 2004). Of the percentage employed, about 50% of them are underemployed because they lack entrepreneurial skills. The business environment in Ghana is hostile to start-up and small-medium scale enterprises (Baah-Boateng, 2013). The biggest issue is the 98% who are left with no jobs. They struggle to seek employment in the informal sector where compliance with labour standards is poor or very low, or they remain unemployed. The effect of this on the economic development of the country is enormous, and a clear indication of an unhealthy economy. The situation is expected to be worse with disruptions to the fabric of society by COVID-19. This is because most companies have scaled down their operations, which implies laying off staff and making some workers redundant. With the world economic recession, the best approach to address unemployment is to equip your labour force with employable skills.

What makes the situation more difficult is the bureaucratic nature of our educational system, which prevents the system from evolving quickly with current trends or addressing societal issues in order to enhance the skills of graduates. Of the countless numbers of technical and traditional universities in the country, graduate unemployment is on the rise, which indicates the failure of the educational system in the country. Most programmes in our universities have outlived their relevance in societal terms, not to mention the inefficacy – and scarcity – of career guidance and counseling for students, TVET-based learning, coaching, and mentoring necessary to equip the youth with the skills necessary for employment.

To address these unemployment challenges, universities must strive to overhaul their programs and pedagogical approaches. Training students for the world of work after higher education has become a major concern for higher education institutions (HEIs) (Succi & Canovi, 2020). The significance of this goal is reflected in the government of Ghana's dedication to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 4 of providing quality education (UN, 2021). Relatedly, universities and other HEIs are being called upon to turn out graduates with employability skills. It is expected that graduations should expectedly crave for their personal skills, competencies and experience if they are to compete favorably in the labour market (Behle, 2020).

While a vast section of the literature brings out employability skills that have to be embedded in graduate training (Osmani *et al.*, 2021), past literature is still vague in terms of how HE equips graduates with the skills necessary for a successful entry to the job market (Maina *et al.*, 2022; Nhleko & van der Westhuizen, 2022). Within the Ghanaian context, research on

employability skills is noticeably scant. The issue of whether HE in Ghana can equip graduates with work experience and skills is yet to be fully addressed, despite the stark increase in graduates in Ghana (Damoah *et al.*, 2021). This being so, it is very important that further studies are conducted to fill this gap by contributing knowledge in terms of how higher education can help address the challenge of mass unemployment among graduate youth in Ghana. Consequently, the researchers make a case for exploring and adopting social enterprise as an option to significantly improve graduate employability in Ghana.

The emerging literature provides empirical evidence to support the argument that social enterprises (SEs) are a viable option to address youth unemployment, poverty, and social challenges (Al-Harasi *et al.*, 2021; Ferguson, 2013; Kajiita & Kang'ethe, 2021; White *et al.*, 2022). Given this background, this paper addresses current state of SE education in Ghana and how it can be harnessed to address the problem of graduate unemployment. With its basis in qualitative research, this article employs conceptual mapping, which aligns with the objectives of this article and also generates ideas for future research. Literature is reviewed in terms of how SE models of businesses can contribute to unemployment challenges in our world today through providing students with employable skills before graduation.

## Methods

The literature review method was chosen because it is a recognized way for highlighting the literature surrounding a concept or occurrence (Chermack & Passmore, 2005). The methodology used for this article's aims was an integrative literature review. About a developing area of study, an "integrative literature review is a special style of inquiry that develops new information" (Torraco, 2005). Integrative literature reviews are one of the most effective methods for gathering information from multiple growing topics (Torraco, 2005). An integrative literature review was used since social enterprise is a developing subject that is being investigated in a variety of domains using different conceptualizations. This study undertakes an integrated review of previous literature and theories regarding the concept of social enterprise and employability in an attempt to identify their relationship.

## Literature review

### The concept of SEs in Ghana

According to Benna and Garba (2016, p. 84), "Ghana's economy is the second-largest in Africa", and Ghana is one of Africa's most established democracies with the most peaceful election in history since 1992 (Oxford Business Group, 2016, pp. 13–16). Currently, the nation has a population of over 30.8 million, according to the Ghana Statistical Service census conducted in 2021 (GSS, 2022).

SEs are hybrid organisations characterized by social and economic value creation processes that foreground social and entrepreneurial dimensions (Doherty *et al.*, 2014). Social enterprises are primarily commercial businesses run to satisfy their stakeholders (Saebi *et al.*, 2019). Graduates from universities come from various societies within their communities. If the training of graduates is channeled into solving the problems of

their communities, there will always be jobs for everyone in those communities since societal problems are unlimited.

A study conducted by the British Council (2016) and Duah-Agyemang (2017) revealed that SE in the Ghanaian environment is an emerging concept. There has been much attention nowadays focused on the concept of social entrepreneurship from both practitioners and researchers globally. However, there are limited studies on social entrepreneurship in Ghana (British Council, 2016). The available studies suggest that most social businesses started after 2004, with close to half of Ghanaian social enterprises incorporated in 2013 or after. Most of the current social enterprise support organisations such as Growth Mosaic, Reach for Change, iSpace, and Impact Hum were established in 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2015, respectively.

The British Council study on social enterprise (2016) found two dominant areas of social enterprises in Ghana. The most cited sectors where we have SEs in Ghana are education and agriculture. SEs in the education sector are particularly dominant in Accra. At the same time, those in the agriculture sector are most common in the North. It was evident in the study that there has not been enough attention paid to social enterprises in these contexts

A study by Twumasi (2013) surveyed the challenges of youth unemployment in Ghana. The study found the leading causes of youth unemployment to include the slow growth of SMEs, lower economic growth rate, lack of skills and knowledge amongst the youth regarding how to start their own business instead of waiting for government employment.

Ghanaian youths account for over 60% of the population (Ghana Youth Employment Policy, 2010), and according to Twumasi (2013), most of them are unemployed. If the youth are not working, it will have a ripple effect on the future economy in Ghana. In their study on the management of SE in Ghana, Balasu (2017) focused on the education sector, leadership, children and rural development, and identified some challenges confronting the study variables. These challenges were related to low awareness of social enterprises, finance/investment, human resource ecosystems mission drift, and governance.

### Legislation governing social enterprises in Ghana

In Ghana, although social enterprises exist and keep growing in number, there is currently no single legislative framework covering and guiding the operations of social enterprises in the country. Consequently, social enterprises are not recognised as a legal form of business. Social enterprises must register as other business forms but are identified as social businesses from their operations. Although there is no single legislation covering social enterprises, these businesses are affected by existing legislation, strategies, and policies in Ghana. These include: an Act of Parliament (Act 680) that established the Venture Capital Trust Fund in 2004; the Free Zones Act, 1995 (Act 506); the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, 2003 (Act 865); the Social Investment Fund; the Registration of Business Names Act, 1962 (Act 151) – amended in 2012 (Act 837); the

Incorporated Private Partnerships Act, 1962 (Act 152); the Companies Act, 2019 (Act 992); and the Cooperative Societies Act, 1968 (NLCD 252).

### Social enterprise and enterprise education

At the heart of social enterprise is enterprise education. Recent work by [Bridge \(2015\)](#) notes that enterprise education is seen as a strategy that prepares students to be entrepreneurial within a non-profit setting. There is a real demand for students to obtain enterprise education, as [Westhead \(2004\)](#) has pointed out that graduates from higher education institutions do not have enough social capital to undertake entrepreneurship activities straight away. In this regard, [Bridge, Hegarty and Porter \(2010\)](#) recommend that enterprise is for everyone throughout their life, especially for graduates, as it develops a foundation of employability and creates innovative thinking. There are even educational programmes that emphasise entrepreneurship as a key element of employability. For example, [Rae \(2007\)](#) has observed that entrepreneurship and innovation is high on society's agenda – especially within universities – as it interconnects with employability.

### Stakeholders in Ghana's social enterprises environment

A study by the British Council in 2016 identified some important institutions that provide support to social enterprises in Ghana. These institutions offer critical support to businesses that are conscious of the ecosystem in Ghana. The study did not consider support for the human resource for the ecosystem, which is expected to be provided by the educational sector of the country. The study grouped these support institutions into those that provide business incubation and workplace services, investment services, industry association and business advisory bodies, and non-profit organisations. [Table 1](#) presents details of some of the identified stakeholders that provide business incubations and workplace service for social business.

The study also identified some investor institutions and their contributions to social enterprises in Ghana. The recognised investor firms are summarised in [Table 2](#). Also missing in [Table 2](#) below is the institutional arrangement to sustain the human resource of the investor ecosystem of social enterprise. A proper educational system would be a conduit in the provision of appropriate human resources for the efficient operation of social enterprises in addressing graduate unemployment.

Several business associations provide technical and advisory support to social enterprises. These include the Association of Ghana Industries, Ghana Centre for Entrepreneurship, Employment, and Innovations, Africa Network for Entrepreneurs, and Impact Capital Advisors. However, there is no formal establishment between them and the formal education sector, which supplies the required human resources for social enterprise.

### Models of social enterprise

The SE model is how they create value for their clients or achieve their mission. This achievement is measured by how well SEs generate profit, how well they bring positive change to society, and then how well they are able to achieve the two altogether. From this measurement, we can observe three models. Enterprises that lay more emphasis on commercial value rather than on social value are referred to as for-profit enterprises. This is also seen in their legal status. On the other hand, enterprises that lay more emphasis on social value rather than commercial value are referred to as non-profit enterprises. Hybrid enterprises are those that emphasise both social and commercial value. This can also be seen in their mixed legal status non-profit and for-profit ([Yu, 2021](#)).

Despite these three models, SEs have several viable models to adopt to achieve their mission. These are the entrepreneur support model, the market intermediary model, the employment

**Table 1. Incubators, accelerators, and workspace in Ghana.**

Institutions	Type	Location	Social enterprise-related activities
<b>Growth Mosaic</b>	Incubator and accelerator	Accra	Helps start-up businesses in Ghana to get their businesses off the ground and to achieve scale. Growth Mosaic's role is significant to start-up social enterprises, especially from the initial mentoring to leveraging appropriate investment funds for growth.
<b>Impact Hub Accra</b>	Incubator, workspace	Accra	Helps start-ups in Ghana to get their businesses off the ground to a scalable position. It also rents out workspace for entrepreneurs. Impact Hub Accra has been supporting the activities of start-ups over some time in the capital city. It is also involved with transformative social impact ideas.
<b>iSpace</b>	Working space	Accra	Rents out workspace to entrepreneurs who develop ideas into marketable opportunities. Builds the capacity of start-ups in a range of ways.
<b>Meltwater Entrepreneurial School of Technology</b>	Incubator and accelerator	Accra	Best known for assisting entrepreneurs within the technology space to transform ideas into commercial opportunities.
<b>Reach for Change</b>	Incubator and funder	Global	Founded by the Kinnevik Group, Reach for Change supports children and youth by improving their quality of life. Reach for Change is a critical player in the social enterprise sphere, helping to scale up ideas to support children through its hybrid funding module.

Note. Adapted from: *The state of SE in Bangladesh, Ghana, India, and Pakistan* (British Council, 2016, p.7)

**Table 2. Investor firms in social enterprises in Ghana.**

Institutions	Type	Location	Social enterprise-Related activities
<b>Acumen</b>	Impact investor	Accra (Global)	Invests in businesses across the globe to eradicate poverty. Builds the capacities of the leaders of the companies they invest in to enable them to run their companies efficiently.
<b>AgDevCo</b>	Impact investor	Accra (Africa-wide)	Invests in scalable agribusiness to increase food security and improve livelihoods. The ultimate goal of AgDevCo is to eradicate poverty.
<b>Injaro Investments</b>	Impact investing	Mauritius	Invests in social impact activities in agriculture across Sub-Saharan Africa. It has invested in Sekaf Ghana, which processes shea nut into shea butter skincare products.
<b>JCS Investments</b>	Impact Investment	Accra	Invests in impact-driven businesses in the financial services sector, as well as SMEs, particularly in rural Ghana.
<b>Lundin Foundation</b>	Impact investor	Accra (Global)	Invests in small and medium-sized businesses with the potential to create employment opportunities and, in the process, sustainably reduce poverty.
<b>Oasis Capital</b>	Impact Investment	Accra	Invests in impactful projects in Africa through the financing of SMEs.
<b>Root Capital</b>	Impact Investor	Accra (East and West Africa and Latin America)	Root Capital is an agribusiness-focused impact investor supporting small-scale farmers to create sustainable livelihoods in rural areas.
<b>Slice Biz</b>	Impact Investment	Accra	A crowd-funded micro-investment platform providing finance for entrepreneurs to scale up their businesses.

Note. Adapted from: *The state of SE in Bangladesh, Ghana, India, and Pakistan* (British Council, 2016, p.7)

model, the fee-for-service model, the low-come client model, the cooperative model, the market linkage model, the service subsidization model, and the organizational support model (Grassl, 2012, as cited in Koeswandi *et al.*, (2021, p. 666). These models are classified on their social values (see Alter, 2007, pp. 33 – 40).

The entrepreneurship support model helps enterprises with support services that get them off the ground. The market intermediary model helps to market the products of their clients. The focus of the employment model is to create employment opportunities and employability skills for their clients. The free-for-service model charges its customers directly for socially beneficial services they provide their clients and they are the most common model. As the name suggests, they provide direct services for low-income clients. The cooperative model is a fee-based membership organization that provides services to the group. This model is more prevalent in emerging economies like Ghana. The market linkage model seeks to build relationships to facilitate the marketing of their client's products and services but not directly selling the product or services to them. The service subsidization model can be adopted by any SE making it one of the most common models. The organization support model sells the products and services of the parent organization to fund social programs. It is worth noting that these models are not executive models for SEs. Enterprises can always design a model appropriate for their cause.

The nine models of SE (see Figure 1) all show the links or relationships between SEs, communities (target population), and

economic value (market). Since communities and their target population are dynamic there will always be a social problem to be addressed in communities. This gives room for job creation and employment, which reduces community problems and enhances social life.

For the SE models to lead to job creation and employment, universities should direct their training to address social problems as well as industry problems. The focus of training should be to address social problems since industry problems are a subset of societal problems. Taking this approach would offer students a broader range of challenges to identify and address, which can consequently create more jobs for the community. Focusing student training on addressing societal problems will also allow issues that seem to have low economic value to private investors to be considered by SEs, thereby creating competitive value for those problems.

#### Social enterprise in the university

With socially oriented objectives of instruction and research, HEIs have traditionally been seen as comparable to public sector SEs. Despite receiving funding from both public and private sources, HEIs have been assigned the same closed structure as the government, resulting in restricted utilization of cutting-edge methods and low levels of innovation (Knapp & Siegel, 2009). Academic traditions like tenure and faculty governance stifle innovation and decision-making, while academic silos stifle university-wide collaboration (Hofer & Sliva, 2016). This makes it difficult for universities to come up with training in response to social problems through their traditional training system. An effective way to address this

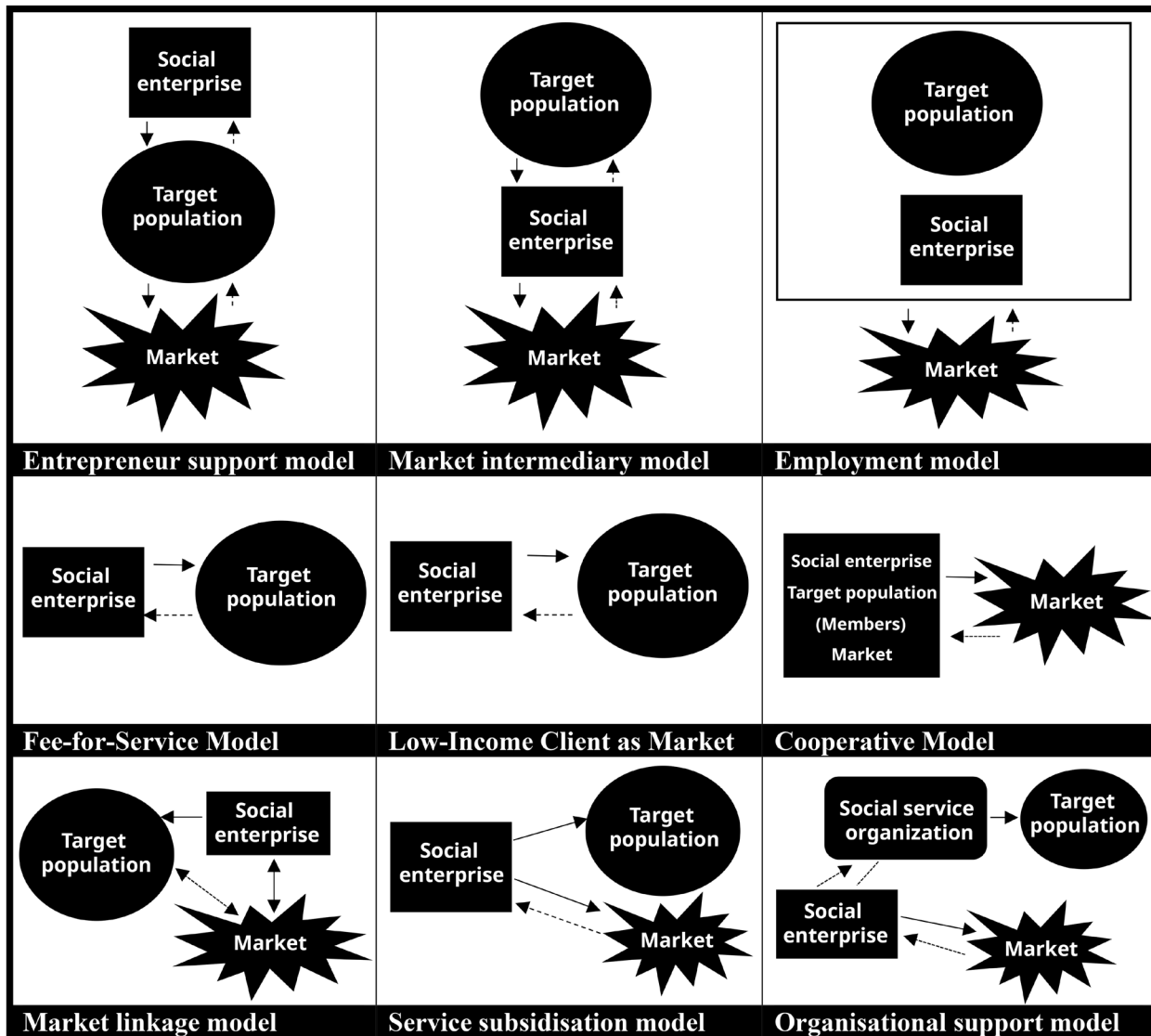


Figure 1. The nine models of social enterprise. Note. Adapted from: Alter, 2007 cited in Grassl, 2012, p. 47.

challenge is through short courses and programmes, as steps are put in place to assimilate new trends into the traditional training system.

A unique skill set is required to apply SE successfully, and training of these skills is emerging in various ways. HEIs present potentially apt settings for its application. According to Milway and Goulay (2013), between 2003 and 2009, the number of social enterprise-related courses in the top eight business schools in the United States increased from 193 to 372. Although comparable statistics for schools of social work are not available, some scholars believe that SE remains an underserved curricular topic (Tracey & Phillips, 2007; Young & Grinsfelder, 2011) and when this is addressed, graduate unemployment problems will see significant reduction.

### Challenges of social enterprises

Supporting SEs and social entrepreneurship needs business models to flourish, prosper, develop, and scale up (Shaw & de Bruin, 2013). One path to such a development is through entrepreneurial behavior, which can be modeled in training through the educational system. In Sub-Saharan Africa, social enterprises are confronted with a wide range of strategic problems. These could be related to external factors such as political uncertainty and tensions (Branzei & Abdelnour, 2010); weak operative markets and “institutional voids” (Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2015); institutional inadequacies, complexity, and pluralism (Zoogah *et al.*, 2015); and environmental challenges (Linnenluecke & Griffiths, 2012; Zoogah *et al.*, 2015). Legal changes, such as labour laws, corporate and ownership rules, environmental regulations, and so on, can all cause external problems for social enterprises. The resilience of

social enterprises relates to their ability to improvise and invent with the little resources available (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Littlewood & Holt, 2018).

## Conclusions

This paper has explored social enterprise as a business tool for creating change at the community level. Social enterprise operates at the borders between the public and private sectors. The commonality of SE is to create a significant societal impact and to generate jobs in the communities they serve, especially for university graduates. This can be made possible when our universities come up with curricula that focus more on societal

issues. This creates a wider horizon for entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs to capitalise on, rather than modeling their businesses on industry needs and challenges. Support for social enterprise is growing, and countries such as Ghana are actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities with a social objective. Consequently, building social enterprise skills into the higher education framework would significantly enhance graduate employability skills.

## Data availability

No data are associated with this article.

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# Open Peer Review

Current Peer Review Status: ? ?

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## Version 1

Reviewer Report 02 December 2022

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### Smile Dzisi

Faculty of Business and Management Studies, Koforidua Technical University, Koforidua, Ghana

This paper seeks to explore the state of the legislative framework in Ghana, as well as social enterprise education, stakeholder engagement, models, and challenges. To achieve this goal, the authors adopted the concept mapping methodology in order to critically explore the relevance of social enterprise in the context of higher education, and also to demonstrate how it could practically serve as a panacea to the rising youth unemployment. The preliminary findings show that the commonality of SE creates a significant societal impact and generates jobs in the communities they serve, especially for university graduates. Thus, the authors concluded by making a case for including social enterprise in the higher education curriculum. Overall, it is a good job, which is useful and relevant to the research community. Nevertheless, I have some few comments and suggestions to improve the paper for passing peer review.

#### Abstract:

- The authors should revise the abstract. It does not provide an overview of the paper. The authors should clearly explain the methodology adopted in the paper. Again, a brief overview of the findings was also not present.

#### INTRODUCTION

- The authors have not provided any background regarding the proposed concept.
- The introduction of the paper should be elaborated further to provide enough info to the general readers

#### Ghana's current underlying economic and social problems

- The report further indicates that, by the end of June 2021, young people were hit with mass unemployment due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic? – Can the authors explain if this applies to the Organization (ILO) report for 2020?
- Poverty, unemployment, poor social amenities, and related socio-economic challenges explain the migration from villages into towns and migration from Ghana to other countries for 'greener pastures? Can the authors provide some empirical data to support the above if any?

**Summary**

- Generally, this section is well written aside the few issues

**METHODS**

- The authors should expand or elaborate the methodology.

**RELATED WORK**

- This section is very detailed, however, I suggest that the authors present the difference between this study and the existing ones.

**CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK**

- This paper has explored social enterprise as a business tool for creating change at the community level. Social enterprise operates at the borders between the public and private sectors. The commonality of SE is to create a significant societal impact and to generate jobs in the communities they serve, especially for university graduates. This can be made possible when our universities come up with curricula that focus more on societal issues. This creates a wider horizon for entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs to capitalize on, rather than modeling their businesses on industry needs and challenges. Support for social enterprise is growing, and countries such as Ghana are actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities with a social objective. Consequently, building social enterprise skills into the higher education framework would significantly enhance graduate employability skills.

I still think that the conclusion of the paper can be organized better to depict the proposed approach in this paper.

**REFERENCES**

- The references on the last page are not consistent. The authors should adopt a particular reference style.

**Is the work clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?**

Partly

**Is the study design appropriate and is the work technically sound?**

Yes

**Are sufficient details of methods and analysis provided to allow replication by others?**

No

**If applicable, is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?**

Partly

**Are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?**

Partly

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results?**

Partly

**Is the argument information presented in such a way that it can be understood by a non-**

**academic audience?**

Yes

**Does the piece present solutions to actual real world challenges?**

Yes

**Is real-world evidence provided to support any conclusions made?**

No

**Could any solutions being offered be effectively implemented in practice?**

Yes

**Competing Interests:** No competing interests were disclosed.

**Reviewer Expertise:** Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Small Business, eLearning and Technical and Vocational Education/ STEM and Public Administration

**I confirm that I have read this submission and believe that I have an appropriate level of expertise to confirm that it is of an acceptable scientific standard, however I have significant reservations, as outlined above.**

Reviewer Report 09 November 2022

<https://doi.org/10.21956/emeraldopenres.15896.r28475>

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**Qingwen Xu**

Silver School of Social Work, New York University, New York, NY, United States

I appreciate the authors' effort to review the current challenges in Ghana and thus evaluate the potential role higher education institutions can play to address and respond to such challenges. A few comments for authors' consideration:

1. Methods: In the abstract, the method used is concept mapping; in the method section, it includes literature review/integrative literature review. Please clarify. It is also important to provide justifications of adopting this approach. Mapping review, scoping review, and integrative review are not exactly the same and have different processes to conduct it and ways to present the result. Some details are needed to describe the review process.
2. The title and introduction are about: to what extent the HE sector can contribute to the employability of college graduate; but the review focuses on SE a lot. Maybe revise the title and introduction section to better fit the review content. It would be helpful to state the research question(s) in the text.

3. Conclusion part can be further elaborated to build upon the literature review, conceptualize the evidence and answer the research question(s).

**Is the work clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?**

Yes

**Is the study design appropriate and is the work technically sound?**

Partly

**Are sufficient details of methods and analysis provided to allow replication by others?**

Partly

**If applicable, is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?**

Not applicable

**Are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?**

No source data required

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results?**

Partly

**Is the argument information presented in such a way that it can be understood by a non-academic audience?**

Yes

**Does the piece present solutions to actual real world challenges?**

Not applicable

**Is real-world evidence provided to support any conclusions made?**

Not applicable

**Could any solutions being offered be effectively implemented in practice?**

Not applicable

**Competing Interests:** No competing interests were disclosed.

**Reviewer Expertise:** Community practice, social policy, underserved groups of people.

**I confirm that I have read this submission and believe that I have an appropriate level of expertise to confirm that it is of an acceptable scientific standard, however I have significant reservations, as outlined above.**

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