

# Assertive Communication as a Key Factor in Social Entrepreneurship

Adriana Reyes Sánchez<sup>1\*</sup>, Carlos González Macías<sup>2</sup>

Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.

Received: 06/05/2025

Accepted: 09/06/2025

Published: 25/06/2025

**Abstract:** This study presents a descriptive investigation based on the analysis and synthesis of scientific literature on assertive communication and social entrepreneurship, aiming to identify assertive communication as a key and fundamental element of the social entrepreneur. A bibliographic review was carried out, consisting of scientific articles published between 2019 and 2024, indexed in Google Scholar in both English and Spanish. However, no specific studies were found that directly address the relationship between assertive communication and social entrepreneurship, revealing a gap in research focused on this communication skill among social entrepreneurs, despite their extensive interaction with affected communities and investors.

**Keywords:** Social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, assertive communication.

## Cite This Article:

Reyes Sánchez A. and González Macías C. J., (2025). Assertive Communication as a Key Factor in Social Entrepreneurship. *World Journal of Economics, Business and Management*, 2(6), 29-33

## Introduction

Social entrepreneurship is not a new concept. However, it is a type of entrepreneurship that several countries have implemented due to its economic and social benefits and its impact on solving societal problems. According to the State of Social Enterprises 2024 report by the Schwab Foundation's Global Alliance for Social Entrepreneurship, there are at least 10 million social enterprises worldwide, generating \$2 trillion in annual revenue and 200 million jobs globally. In Mexico alone, there are 3,738 social enterprises.

The promotion of this kind of entrepreneurship is driven by various recognitions and awards that seek to honor social innovation efforts that respond to community needs.

Currently, the economic and social relevance of social entrepreneurship is significant. The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2023) defines social enterprises as:

“A social enterprise is an entity that trades goods and services to fulfill a social objective, and whose primary purpose is not to maximize profit for its owners, but to reinvest in the continued pursuit of its social goals” (p. 43).

At the first summit for social entrepreneurship collaboration, during the panel “The 5 Attributes an Impact Leader Must Have by 2030,” Fosado (director of Visionarios 2030) emphasized that communication is a key characteristic of social entrepreneurship, due to the need to present social proposals to both communities and investors.

According to Rahim and Mohtar (2015), social entrepreneurs possess the ability to identify social problems and the drive to solve them innovatively, raising mass social awareness. Similarly, Talukder and Lakner (2023) define a social entrepreneur as someone who seeks business opportunities that benefit local or broader communities through innovative solutions to urgent societal issues.

The term 'social entrepreneurship' emphasizes innovation, business opportunity, and solving social problems. On the other hand, previous studies portray the social entrepreneur as an empathetic agent who identifies urgent needs and transforms them into profitable ventures. As noted by Armijos-Morocho et al. (2022), entrepreneurs often face situations where they must be assertive to express themselves and negotiate effectively. Given the social skills attributed to social entrepreneurs, studying assertive communication in this context is essential, under the assumption that it has a positive impact on social enterprises.

Assertive communication is a functional communication style. According to Herrera (2019) and Farias et al. (2020), it facilitates negotiation, encourages open conversation across contexts, and allows individuals to express themselves without offending others. Based on Lesmes et al. (2020), assertive communication is direct and respectful, promotes participation, and seeks mutually beneficial solutions. It also fosters a relaxed and reciprocal flow of information and the exchange of ideas.

It is worth noting that, while scientific studies exist on assertive communication and entrepreneurship, very few focus specifically on social entrepreneurship. This study seeks to explore the relationship between assertive communication and social entrepreneurship, recognizing that, unlike general

## \*Corresponding Author

Adriana Reyes Sánchez\*

Email: [adriana.reyes@uacj.mx](mailto:adriana.reyes@uacj.mx).

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license



entrepreneurship, the social variant entails unique, humanistic, and socially impactful characteristics that require a specific communication approach, particularly for:

- Identifying urgent and addressable social problems.
- Engaging with change agents interested in participating in entrepreneurship.
- Persuading and/or negotiating with investors to secure funding.
- Interacting with and understanding the needs of social enterprise beneficiaries.

This study aims to generate a clearer understanding of assertive communication in social entrepreneurship, given the research gap regarding how this communication style supports the sustainability of such enterprises and shapes the profile of social entrepreneurs.

Although scientific literature on social entrepreneurship exists, few sources frame assertive communication as a key element. Hence, the study sets out the following objectives:

- To describe the role of assertive communication in social entrepreneurship.
- To identify scientific documents that explore the link between assertive communication and social entrepreneurship.

Thus, recognizing assertive communication as a fundamental trait in social entrepreneurship is essential for identifying potential social entrepreneurs capable of addressing global crises through their ventures. This study contributes to science by connecting assertive communication with the generation and sustainability of social enterprises.

## Methodology

A narrative literature review was conducted, guided by the research question: What is the relationship between assertive communication and social entrepreneurship? To carry out this investigation, scientific articles published between 2019 and 2024

were used, indexed in the Google Scholar database. The keywords used in both Spanish and English were assertive communication and social entrepreneurship.

The review included studies specifically related to assertive communication within the context of social entrepreneurship. Studies addressing assertive communication in other forms of entrepreneurship or business ventures were excluded.

## Results

Following the bibliographic search based on the two mentioned variables, a total of 110 articles were found. Of these, 84 were excluded after reviewing the title or abstract. Ultimately, only 6 articles were included in this study, as they explicitly relate assertive communication with social entrepreneurship or the social entrepreneur.

In alignment with the study's objective, the selected articles describe how assertive communication is involved in social enterprises and the type of relationship that exists between the two variables.

Some articles help to profile the social entrepreneur. For instance, Bilbao and Vélez (2015) identify communication as one of the core social competencies, which includes the ability to listen, express, give feedback, and show interest, all within an empathetic and assertive communication process. Similarly, Espinosa et al. (2021) and Franco (2017) point out that one of the success factors in social entrepreneurship is the entrepreneur's ability to serve as an intermediary between affected communities and stakeholders. Leadership, participation, and collaboration with others help social entrepreneurs secure the resources needed to establish impactful projects and maintain communication with the beneficiaries.

Below is Table 1, which summarizes the analyzed articles, including titles, authors, key contributions, and conclusions:

Authors and Title	Year	Contributions
Díaz, Gaby Naldy Corimanya. "Entrepreneurship and Different Strategies to Achieve Business Sustainability"	2023	- One strategy for sustaining a business is developing empathy with the client. - Assertive communication is viewed as a key entrepreneurial competency.
Rodríguez. "The Sustainability of Entrepreneurship in Colombia: Challenges and Opportunities"	2023	- Highlights several personal competencies that positively influence entrepreneurship, including communication.
Villa et al. "A Training Model to Develop Social Entrepreneurship"	2021	- Entrepreneurs use argumentative skills to defend proposals and convince investors. - Interpersonal communication is the principal trait of a social entrepreneur and must be nurtured and developed.
Duque and Ortiz. "Research Perspectives and Trends in Social Entrepreneurship"	2022	- Emphasizes the need for more research into the qualities of social entrepreneurs. - Stress the importance of consensus-building among stakeholders to ensure mutual benefit.
Lachira et al. "Assertive Communication: A Strategy for Developing Interpersonal Relationships"	2020	- Assertive individuals can connect with diverse social groups and align interests across socioeconomic divides.
De la Garza et al. "Inventory of Causes of Failure in Social Entrepreneurs in Mexico (CAFES-M)"	2023	- Some social ventures arise in response to crisis or strong community connections. - The entrepreneur must identify all stakeholders and understand their interests.

Studies by Díaz (2023) and Pesantez (2021) present assertive communication as one of the core competencies a social entrepreneur must possess to ensure the success of their organization. In other words, to build a sustainable social enterprise, the entrepreneur must develop communicative skills, including an assertive communication style. According to Armijos et al. (2022) and Calua et al. (2021), assertive communication involves the use of oral language, written expression, or gestures that foster trust in the communicative process.

Rodríguez (2023) points out that social enterprises involve personal attributes, one of which is communication. He recommends further research to develop training programs for social entrepreneurs at the university level.

It is worth mentioning that while some studies consider communication as a general entrepreneurial competency, they do not always specify the context of social entrepreneurship. Furthermore, previous research has not clearly addressed assertive communication specifically in relation to social enterprises.

However, Villa et al. (2021) explain that communication is the primary competency of social entrepreneurs. In this type of entrepreneurship, it is essential to present the social enterprise's virtues clearly and precisely and to defend its social mission.

Additionally, Duque and Ortiz (2022), along with Fitzgerald and Shepherd (2018), emphasize the importance of creating a collaborative environment among those involved in social enterprises, in which mutual benefit is prioritized. Consensus-building is therefore seen as an opportunity to establish empathetic and assertive agreements among users, entrepreneurs, investors, and the broader community. Assertive communication thus becomes a key factor in negotiating and building such agreements.

Similarly, Rahim and Mohtar (2015), as well as Johnson (2001), explain that social entrepreneurs are capable of empowering others by passionately communicating their mission to generate positive change. In this way, communication becomes vital when inviting society and investors to join a social solution.

Just as high levels of communication are required, previous studies—such as those by Goleman (2004) and Lachira et al. (2020)—highlight that entrepreneurs operate in a wide range of social communication contexts. Their ability to listen assertively to affected individuals allows them to reach agreements that can bring about meaningful change.

Furthermore, De la Garza et al. (2019) point out that some social enterprises arise from strong, ongoing communication with marginalized communities. Assertive communication is thus essential to understanding the challenges these communities face, as it involves attentive listening, empathy, and trust-building—key elements for identifying viable solutions.

Based on the studies reviewed in this research, it is evident that assertive communication is a necessary component of social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs engage in constant negotiation with various stakeholders to defend their initiatives. They must also maintain assertive communication with potential investors, as this facilitates favorable agreements for their social causes.

Moreover, social entrepreneurs often sustain close relationships with the communities they aim to serve. Their openness, empathy,

and dialogue foster a deeper understanding of the issues at hand, allowing for the development of fair and viable solutions.

Previous studies on the profile of social entrepreneurs—such as Cruz-Sandoval (2023), which focuses on educational training—also highlight communication as a core social competency. According to García-González (2020), communication helps build trust with affected populations and enables ongoing dialogue with investors or change agents interested in partnerships.

Nevertheless, there are still no specific studies that directly examine the relationship between assertive communication and social entrepreneurship.

## Conclusion

In regard to the specific objective of identifying the relationship between assertive communication and social entrepreneurship, the literature reviewed indicates that communication is indeed a component of entrepreneurship. However, there is a clear need to specifically address assertive communication within the context of social entrepreneurship. The current body of research lacks clarity on whether assertive communication influences the creation and sustainability of social enterprises.

This study sets a precedent for highlighting the importance of assertive communication as a core competency of the social entrepreneur. Therefore, future research is recommended to further explore the role of assertive communication in the following areas:

- Identifying urgent social issues;
- Engaging in meaningful conversations with affected populations;
- Building trust-based relationships to create joint solutions;
- Negotiating with institutions and stakeholders;
- Approaching investors with clarity and confidence;
- Delivering clear and compelling messages about the purpose and impact of social entrepreneurship initiatives.

## References

1. Alianza Global para el Emprendimiento Social. (2024). \*State of the social enterprise sector\*. <https://initiatives.weforum.org/global-alliance-for-social-entrepreneurship/state-of-the-sector>
2. Armijos Morocho, N. P., & Balladares Marín, C. M. (2022). La asertividad como factor influyente en los emprendimientos de la ciudad de Machala. <https://repositorio.utmachala.edu.ec/handle/48000/19902>
3. Cruz-Sandoval, M., Vázquez-Parra, J. C., Alonso-Galicia, P. E., & Carlos-Arroyo, M. (2023). Perceived achievement of social entrepreneurship competency: The influence of age, discipline, and gender among women in higher education. \*Sustainability\*, 15\*(13), 9956. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15139956>
4. De la Garza Carranza, M. T., Zavala Berbena, M. A., López-Lemus, J. A., & López de Alba, P. L. (2019). Inventario de las causas del fracaso en emprendedores sociales en México (CAFES-M). \*Revista Perspectivas\*, 43\*, 107–134. [http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1994-37332019000100005](http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1994-37332019000100005)

5. Díaz, G. N. C. (2023). Emprendimiento y las diferentes estrategias para lograr la sostenibilidad del negocio. *\*Gestión en el Tercer Milenio*, 26\*(52), 301–316. <https://doi.org/10.15381/gtm.v26i52.27082>
6. Duque Hurtado, P., & Ortiz Ortiz, D. (2022). Perspectivas y tendencias de investigación en emprendimiento social. *\*Desarrollo Gerencial*, 14\*(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.17081/dege.14.1.5082>
7. Espinosa, J. M., Briones, A. J., & Hernández, E. (2022). La financiación del emprendimiento social: Estudio de la comunicación y el uso de las redes sociales en la plataforma de crowdfunding 'Goteo'. *\*CIRIEC-España, Revista de Economía Pública, Social y Cooperativa*, 106\*, 199–233. <https://doi.org/10.7203/CIRIEC-E.106.17819>
8. Farías, L., Espinoza, C., & Mora, N. (2020). Habilidades cognitivas y comunicación asertiva en los profesionales de ejecutivo. *\*593 Digital Publisher CEIT*, 5\*(6-1), 486–495. <http://dx.doi.org/10.33386/593dp.2020.6-1.446>
9. Fosado, A. (2024). Los 5 atributos que debe tener un líder de impacto rumbo a 2030. <https://enfoquenoticias.com.mx/se-llevo-a-cabo-la-primera-edicion-de-impact-days-2024-cumbre-de-colaboracion-e-innovacion-para-emprendedores-sociales>
10. García-González, A., Ramírez-Montoya, M. S., De León, G., & Aragón, S. (2020). El emprendimiento social como una competencia transversal: Construcción y validación de un instrumento de valoración en el contexto universitario. *\*Revesco, Revista de Estudios Cooperativos*, 136\*, 1–16. <https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/REVE.71862>
11. Lachira Estrada, D., Luján Vera, P., Mogollón Taboada, M., & Silva Juárez, R. (2020). La comunicación asertiva: Una estrategia para desarrollar las relaciones interpersonales. *\*Revista Latinoamericana de Difusión Científica*, 2\*(3), 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.38186/difcie.23.06>
12. Lesmes Silva, A. K., Barrientos-Monsalve, E. J., & Cordero Díaz, M. C. (2020). Comunicación asertiva: ¿Estrategia de competitividad empresarial? *\*AiBi Revista de Investigación, Administración e Ingeniería*, 8\*(1), 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.15649/2346030X.757>
13. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). *\*What is the social and solidarity economy? A review of concepts\** (LEED Papers No. 2023/13). <https://doi.org/10.1787/dbc7878d-en>
14. Rahim, H. L., & Mohtar, S. (2015). Emprendimiento social: Una perspectiva diferente. *\*International Academic Research Journal of Business and Technology*, 1\*(1), 9–15. [https://web.archive.org/web/20180512133409id\\_/http://www.myjournal.my/filebank/published\\_article/36281/10.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180512133409id_/http://www.myjournal.my/filebank/published_article/36281/10.pdf)
15. Rodríguez Arias, L. V. (2023). The sustainability of entrepreneurship in Colombia: Challenges and opportunities. *\*SCT Proceedings in Interdisciplinary Insights and Innovations*, 1\*, 81. <https://doi.org/10.56294/pii202381>
16. Sáenz Bilbao, N., & López Vélez, A. (2015). Las competencias de emprendimiento social, Coems: Aproximación a través de programas de formación universitaria en Iberoamérica. *\*Revesco, Revista de Estudios Cooperativos*, 119\*, 159–182. <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36741404007>
17. Talukder, S. C., & Lakner, Z. (2023). Exploring the landscape of social entrepreneurship and crowdfunding: A bibliometric analysis. *\*Sustainability*, 15\*, 9411. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15129411>
18. Villa Sánchez, A., Arias Guzmán, M. D. J., & Peña Lang, M. B. (2021). Un modelo de formación para desarrollar el emprendimiento social. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/educar.1153>
19. Global Alliance for Social Entrepreneurship. (2024). *\*State of the social enterprise sector\**. <https://initiatives.weforum.org/global-alliance-for-social-entrepreneurship/state-of-the-sector>
20. Armijos Morocho, N. P., & Balladares Marín, C. M. (2022). Assertiveness as an influential factor in the enterprises of Machala. <https://repositorio.utmachala.edu.ec/handle/48000/19902>
21. Cruz-Sandoval, M., Vázquez-Parra, J. C., Alonso-Galicia, P. E., & Carlos-Arroyo, M. (2023). Perceived achievement of social entrepreneurship competency: The influence of age, discipline, and gender among women in higher education. *\*Sustainability*, 15\*(13), 9956. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15139956>
22. De la Garza Carranza, M. T., Zavala Berbena, M. A., López-Lemus, J. A., & López de Alba, P. L. (2019). Inventory of the causes of failure in social entrepreneurs in Mexico (CAFES-M). *\*Revista Perspectivas*, 43\*, 107–134. [http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1994-37332019000100005](http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1994-37332019000100005)
23. Díaz, G. N. C. (2023). Entrepreneurship and different strategies to achieve business sustainability. *\*Gestión en el Tercer Milenio*, 26\*(52), 301–316. <https://doi.org/10.15381/gtm.v26i52.27082>
24. Duque Hurtado, P., & Ortiz Ortiz, D. (2022). Research perspectives and trends in social entrepreneurship. *\*Desarrollo Gerencial*, 14\*(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.17081/dege.14.1.5082>
25. Espinosa, J. M., Briones, A. J., & Hernández, E. (2022). Financing social entrepreneurship: A study of communication and social media usage on the crowdfunding platform 'Goteo'. *\*CIRIEC-España, Journal of Public, Social and Cooperative Economy*, 106\*, 199–233. <https://doi.org/10.7203/CIRIEC-E.106.17819>
26. Farías, L., Espinoza, C., & Mora, N. (2020). Cognitive skills and assertive communication among executive professionals. *\*593 Digital Publisher CEIT*, 5\*(6-1), 486–495. <http://dx.doi.org/10.33386/593dp.2020.6-1.446>
27. Fosado, A. (2024). The 5 attributes an impact leader must have by 2030. <https://enfoquenoticias.com.mx/se-llevo-a-cabo-la-primera-edicion-de-impact-days-2024-cumbre-de-colaboracion-e-innovacion-para-emprendedores-sociales>
28. García-González, A., Ramírez-Montoya, M. S., De León, G., & Aragón, S. (2020). Social entrepreneurship as a transversal competency: Construction and validation of an assessment tool in the university context. *\*Revesco, Journal of*

- Cooperative Studies, 136\*, 1–16.  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/REVE.71862>
29. Lachira Estrada, D., Luján Vera, P., Mogollón Taboada, M., & Silva Juárez, R. (2020). Assertive communication: A strategy for developing interpersonal relationships. *\*Latin American Journal of Scientific Dissemination*, 2\*(3), 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.38186/difcie.23.06>
  30. Lesmes Silva, A. K., Barrientos-Monsalve, E. J., & Cordero Díaz, M. C. (2020). Assertive communication: A strategy for business competitiveness? *\*AiBi Journal of Research, Administration and Engineering*, 8\*(1), 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.15649/2346030X.757>
  31. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). *\*What is the social and solidarity economy? A review of concepts\** (LEED Papers No. 2023/13). <https://doi.org/10.1787/dbc7878d-en>
  32. Rahim, H. L., & Mohtar, S. (2015). Social entrepreneurship: A different perspective. *\*International Academic Research Journal of Business and Technology*, 1\*(1), 9–15. [https://web.archive.org/web/20180512133409id\\_/http://www.myjournal.my/filebank/published\\_article/36281/10.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180512133409id_/http://www.myjournal.my/filebank/published_article/36281/10.pdf)
  33. Rodríguez Arias, L. V. (2023). The sustainability of entrepreneurship in Colombia: Challenges and opportunities. *\*SCT Proceedings in Interdisciplinary Insights and Innovations*, 1\*, 81. <https://doi.org/10.56294/piii202381>
  34. Sáenz Bilbao, N., & López Vélez, A. (2015). Social entrepreneurship competencies: An approach through university training programs in Ibero-America. *\*Revesco, Journal of Cooperative Studies*, 119\*, 159–182. <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36741404007>
  35. Talukder, S. C., & Lakner, Z. (2023). Exploring the landscape of social entrepreneurship and crowdfunding: A bibliometric analysis. *\*Sustainability*, 15\*, 9411. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15129411>
  36. Villa Sánchez, A., Arias Guzmán, M. D. J., & Peña Lang, M. B. (2021). A training model to develop social entrepreneurship. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/educar.1153>