

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Asma Zarrouk

BACKGROUND & PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am Asma Zarrouk. I was born in September 20, 1987. In 2015, I started my academic career as an assistant professor within the Department of Management at the Faculty of Economics Sciences and Management of Sousse, related to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Tunisia. In 2018, I became the first candidate to obtain international awards at my school for investigating Entrepreneurship and Continued Entrepreneurship from a gender perspective. I obtained The International Council of Small Businesses PhD student Award and the Best PhD Project award from IPAG business school, Ecole de Management Leonard De Vinci and Grenoble Ecole de Management.

Higher education

I studied four years in a row to receive a Bachelor's degree in International Business. Then I went for a Master's degree in Entrepreneurship. Slim Ben Mimoun, professor at Skema Business School supervised me.

Career

My current research involves using robust theories such as Ajzen's planned behavior and reasoned action theories as well as statistically powerful methods such as Mahalanobis Distance Matching to create and compare similar pairs of men and women in Kauffman Dataset. In 2019, I participated to the Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference and published my first peer-reviewed abstract, which appeared at the Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Journal. In 2018, I attended Grenoble Ecole de Management as a visiting researcher and PhD Student. I obtained "passeport talent chercheur" from the French Embassy. There, I achieved an erratic one-shot success while attending the main European and American Entrepreneurship conferences. I built a strong international social and human capital and became a member of the European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship. I obtained awards and have appeared in Grenoble Ecole de Management monthly Newsletter. In 2015, I started my teaching career as an assistant professor in my home country. I occupied academic positions such as pre-examiner, member of jury and co-supervisor as well as other academic merits and positions of trust.

Gender Equality in Entrepreneurship and Continued Entrepreneurship

The purpose of the first part of my research was to better understand to what extent gender is related to key entrepreneurial outcomes: growth intentions and realizations. What is the relationship between the gender of the entrepreneur and his/her intention to start and grow a business? Does gender play a role in the relationship between growth intentions and realized growth? Using Kauffman Dataset and by comparing the whole sample, my colleagues and me found that gender plays a significant role. Yet by comparing similar pairs of male and female led-businesses of the same sample, we have been able to figure out that gender does not play a significant role. The second part of the study focused on culture differences and the role of gender equality in fostering economic development. Using the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, my colleagues and I have found that there is a gender gap between men and women nascent entrepreneurs and that gender equality in Entrepreneurship fosters economic development because it reduces the need of a given country to invest in R&D. In fact, findings suggested a non-linear role of R&D in OECD countries. Interestingly, Gender equality appeared to be beneficial to men too.

OBJECTIVES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING

My main objective is to publish research papers and practice teaching at a university that could boost my career internationally. Being an insider will allow me to build stronger human and social capital, collaborate in order to publish in four-star journals and find better academic positions.

Teaching Proposal

Responding to Eldman et al. (2008) call to focus on “actions” rather than “research and plan writing” while teaching Entrepreneurship, I developed the "My Hero" Entrepreneurship program. It is a program based on collaborative research action and more specifically, the collective construction of the problem. In fact, Greenwood and Levin (1998) claim that unlike conventional fields or experimental research, action research is rooted in the desire to solve a concrete and practical problem, to transform a situation experienced as problematic by the actors into a favorable situation. In addition, Landry (1995) defines a problem as the recognition by an individual or a group that an action has failed and the reflection of the reasons for this failure that may be useful in remedying the situation. The "My Hero" program will start by the diagnosis and intervention during Humane Entrepreneurship Actions that will be evaluated using meta-cognitive thinking self-assessment tools. This program responds to the constructive alignment (Big and Tang, 2011). In fact, “the learner constructs his or her own learning trough relevant learning activities. The teacher’s job is to create a learning environment that supports the learning activities appropriate to achieving the desired learning outcomes. The key is that all components in the teaching system- the curriculum and its intended outcomes, the teaching method used, the assessment tasks- are aligned to each other. All are tuned to learning activities assessed in the desired learning outcomes. The learner finds it difficult to escape without learning appropriately.” (ibid)

CONCENTRATION ON HIGHER ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

I chose Higher Education and Entrepreneurship because I have relevant research/teaching experience in this field with undergraduate students.

Pedagogical Traditional and Research-Based Teaching

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Tunisia establishes the educational instructions and a team of professors coordinate to design the courses collaboratively. I was operating under the supervision of the Management department of the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management of Sousse. I had taught students of different undergraduate levels the following subjects: Entrepreneurship, Production Management, and Well-being at work. The main objectives of the Ministry regarding Entrepreneurship education is to increase knowledge about Entrepreneurship, influence entrepreneurial intentions and encourage job creation. Karimi et al (2016) describes these three objectives as the "Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship". At public universities, the students take many courses such as accounting, finance, marketing, and management. The aim of the 8-month Entrepreneurship program is to increase self-efficacy, pro-activeness, and risk taking among the students. They learn how to prepare a business plan and how to talk and network with practitioners. According to Sanchez, (2013) this is “a significant Entrepreneurship education”. I tried to implement Research based Teaching and Learning tests in Traditional Teaching class. In my class, students conducted research, discussed the readings, answered practical exercises, created group dynamics and fostered creativity. I used emails and social media to provide the students with videos and complementary materials or instructions. My intervention was flexible and updated thanks to high quality open science.

The evaluation was a function of three tests and comments about the students: First evaluation test, oral test and final written exam. The tests and final exams were usually multiple-choice questions. They were prepared in coordination with the responsible team of professors. In addition, the students demonstrated their acquired knowledge in pieces of art and materialized products (Gabi Reinmaan, 2019). The oral tests were related to participation in class, a Power point presentation or tutored projects. The evaluation notes focused on the student’s own perceived talents and skills. At the same time, I helped the students

by raising their awareness about observed skills such as critical thinking, coordination with others, emotional intelligence, service orientation, negotiation, cognitive flexibility, etc. My students completed challenges related to entrepreneurial skills, tasks, and outcomes and passed their final exams. Depending on the budget, I awarded distinguished students.

Discussion

I developed an educational program that could have a positive impact on the student's motivation and implementation. My teaching experience is characterized by positive interaction with students. I tried to get to know them, give them effective and active learning and prompt feedback either inside the university or online. I encouraged them to be independent and life-longer learner. I listened to my students' expectations and created safe challenges where I emphasized time. I am committed to develop more teaching skills and new techniques to promote active learning. I will be pleased to discuss my teaching and research proposals to provide further details.

Reference

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