



Entrepreneurial Pedagogy: Innovation and Skills Transfer

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Abstract :

The purpose of this paper is to address the emerging pedagogical practice in social entrepreneurship education by exploring the Safirlab experience as an effective practice to enhance social entrepreneurship value among student and to help them to create and develop a start-up. The Safirlab experience is also considered as an accelerator of an innovative start-up in North Africa and the Middle East.

Key Words: Social entrepreneurship education, Safirlab, North Africa and the Middle East, accelerator, start-up.

JEL Classification : L26, O32

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Introduction:

To better understand the development of social entrepreneurship (SE), it would be helpful to trace its origins. Social entrepreneurship has appeared since the 1960s (Thompson 2002); it is a global movement inspired by North America (Draperi, 2010). Based on economic and social value creation (Dif et al., 2020), social entrepreneurship is a field that is gaining an increasing attention in the media, academic areas, government, charities and corporations (Nicholls, 2009). Recently large studies are getting interested in social entrepreneurship as a process in which social change affects economic life. Thus, developing a new generation of youth social entrepreneurs is considered as a challenge in a strategy of promoting social entrepreneurship.

However, a social entrepreneur is someone who realises the opportunity in addressing a social problem. He brings change, generates profits and alleviates social problems (Thompson 2002). The aim of this contribution is to illustrate the role of the Safirlab experience as an effective practice to enhance social entrepreneurship value among students and help them create and develop a start-up. The Safirlab experience is an accelerator for an innovative start-up in North Africa and the Middle East.



This paper offers insights into how Safirlab changes and promotes entrepreneurial spirit among youth students by using the best pedagogical practices in teaching social entrepreneurship and enhancing innovation culture.

This study concentrates on answering to following research question: **what is the role of Safirlab in social entrepreneurship?**

In attempt to answer this question, the following hypothesis is stated: SafirLab plays a crucial role in men's social entrepreneur.

I. Literature review

1. Social entrepreneurship

The principal idea of social entrepreneurship is to develop solutions to social, cultural or environmental issues. This idea is attracting more entrepreneurs called social entrepreneur who are able to apply business models, principles and leadership skills to address social issues. For Dees (1998), any social entrepreneurship definition should reflect the need for a substitute for the market discipline that works for business entrepreneurs. Based on this point of view, social entrepreneurship focuses on the role of social entrepreneur as a change agent in the social sector.

Five tasks can explain social entrepreneur behaviours (Dees, 1998): (1) the ability to adopt a mission, to create and sustain social value, (2) the ability to recognise and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission, (3) the ability to engage in the process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning, (4) the ability to act boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and finally (5) the ability to exhibit a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created. Indeed, social entrepreneurs make up one group or species within the greater entrepreneurial concept (Dees, 1998). A social entrepreneur is an actor who is mostly defined as a particular type of entrepreneurs with a social mission and able to recognise a social problem. Despite his social mission, a social entrepreneur uses entrepreneurial strategies to create social change through a business venture.

According to Mair and Marti (2006), social entrepreneurship is a "*process involving the innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities to catalyse social change and/or address social needs*" from this definition, a social entrepreneur is a social innovator's which create new value through a process of change. In addition, researches on social entrepreneurship refer to the non-profit purpose in creating a social value (Austin et al., 2006), an engagement in cross-sector partnerships (Sagawa & Segal, 2000) and alleviated of social problems that catalyse social transformation (Alvord et al., 2004). For other researchers, social entrepreneurship is a process (Perrini & Vurro, 2006) of creating social venture that begins with a clear, social mission and the identification of a viable opportunity arising from vision-oriented and crisis-oriented factors. Moreover, social



entrepreneurship is a pursuit of social objectives using innovative tools in order to create product, organizations, new practices that contribute to the social benefits (Guo & Bielefeld, 2014). The study of social entrepreneurship as a field leads to deepen the understanding of the role of the social entrepreneur as a central actor in this context. Thus, questions such as: *who is the social entrepreneur? What is the difference between him and the classic entrepreneur?* Push attention to examine the concept of social entrepreneur carefully. Becoming a social entrepreneur depend on the way to do it, Dyer et al (2017) classified the social entrepreneur into three profile based on his leadership skill set, (*bricoleur, constructor and engineers*). The bricoleur has a building capacity; combining existing resources to focus on creating value. The name bricoleur comes from bricolage; a French word that refers to the ability to create something by combining diverse and different elements into a new setting. The constructor develops new methods, products or services by bringing new social value. He builds something new that did not exist before. And finally, the engineer is someone who works to make change, he designs a more efficient social system at the institutional levels.

Likewise, our reflection was to prompt a less nuanced discussion on the social entrepreneurship concept and social entrepreneur profile. It is clear now that social entrepreneurship is more than the creation of a new venture; it is a phoneme that emerges with a different vision than commercial entrepreneurship.

2. Enhancing social entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in developing an economic and social life. As well as commercial entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship depends on market opportunités and valuable projects. Enhancing social entrepreneurship means using techniques that help students create companies that provide solutions to social, cultural or environmental issues. In fact, students trained on the social dimension of entrepreneurship are prepared to deal with the challenges of social value. The dilemma is in the value of profits that will realise the future project, as a teacher we have to convert the social orientation of an idea into a profitable business idea by co-creating with the student's initial idea. The task is more than doing a project; the programmes are oriented to enhance the students' awareness and social entrepreneurial intentions. Table 1 present the main actors implicated in improving Social Entrepreneurship. In relation to the promotion of entrepreneurial spirit; actions oriented to integrate essential social entrepreneurship education for sustainable development of the entrepreneurial culture are not limited to offering new programme content or syllabus. Ndou (2021) classified six categories of actions oriented to integrate social entrepreneurship in higher education European universities. The process of integrating entrepreneurship within universities (DIF, 2018) responds to the higher education system's ability to focus on the primary role entrepreneurship in solving students employability issues and industry needs. In this paper one seeks to improve the previous approach to the process of integrating social entrepreneurship education.

**Table 1: «Actors implicated in enhancing Social Entrepreneurship»**

Author	Actor enhancing SE	Actions
(Apostolakis, 2011)	The role of higher education in enhancing social entrepreneurship; it can be enhanced by particular actions of universities. Close relationships between social entrepreneurship and higher education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Emerging programme's SE based on outcomes not the process. – Social entrepreneurial orientation. – Social entrepreneurship culture (University's Innovation center) – Implication of SE for the community.
(Zainol et al., 2014)	Social entrepreneurship organisation (foundation or associative movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Funding students from countries that have minority of Muslim community.
(Dyer et al., 2017)	San Francisco School helps students under the program of the micro-credit organisation Foundation Paraguaya (founded by Martin Burt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enhances social value to each student who graduates and gives him the skills to eliminate poverty in their own life. – Training applied to build Social entrepreneurship skills.
(Clevenger, 2020)	Higher education (example of implication)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offering financial aid and funding for social project, – Offering relevant programs in entrepreneurship education for self-employability, – Teaching students to behave ethically, for employability, giving those students internship and – Funding case studies or competitions to solve business problems and rewarding best practice ideas.
(Ndou, 2021)	European universities (sample of 30 courses in SE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social entrepreneurship education program oriented to enhance skills and knowledge by promoting critical and creative thinking (<i>problem-solving capabilities</i>). – Research activities oriented in Social area, – Community and Networking creation, – Competition activities, – Structural support (providing student virtual networking platform) – Financial support

Source: author conception.



3. SafirLab a program for youth social entrepreneur

It is well known that strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit of the youth generation is becoming the key to the unemployment problem. In social entrepreneurship, the concept is the same with a particular mission which is solving a social problem that can be engaged in social venture creation. Some non-government organisation leaders in the promotion of social entrepreneurship offer programs that are intended to act as an incubator to support the social entrepreneur. That is why SafirLab experience is attracting considerable attention; known as an incubator, it aims young people with innovative social projects in North Africa and the Middle East. Moreover, pushing young people to work hard to develop their societies, to improve their daily lives and promote freedom of expression are the primary objectives of this program. One of the challenges areas SafirLab's mission is to create social venture based on social values as the right to education, the raising awareness of health-related issues, the creation of citizen media and the women's rights across the Arab world. For strengthening civil society and developing online media, SafirLab offers tailored support to one project leader proposed by young people from the Arab world countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian territories, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen). Thus, SafirLab is providing a training process based on an alternating skill building workshops, personalised diagnoses and professional projects meetings in three working languages, French, English and Arabic.

Sophie Vannier, a co-founder of the Social Factory, highlights the SafirLab training efficiency in enhancing social entrepreneurship, *"By providing them with some key pointers, tools and advice from more experienced people,.... By immediately offering them an entrepreneurial approach, we will be able to contribute to the longevity of the projects."* she says. SafirLab is targeting the young generation aged between 20 and 30 years old with a result of 75 accepted project leaders.

II. Methodology

This article will examine the effect of Safirlab experience in strengthening social entrepreneurship among young Arab. one analyses a sample of ten qualitative cases of youth social entrepreneur who participated in the Safirlab 2018 editions (Table 2).

**Table2 : « Arabic social entrepreneur profile, Safirlab 2018 editions. »**

Case	Gender	Project	Country
1	Female	Steeps	Algeria
2	Female	Radiocean	Tunisia
3	Female	Green Pyramids	Lebanon
4	Female	Yummy	Libya
5	Male	Jordan Waste Chutes	Jordan
6	Female	On sport and rights	Libya
7	Male	Mahdia1	Tunisia
8	Female	Teen	Algeria
9	Female	Savvy Element	Lebanon
10	Female	Askadar	The Palestinian Territories

Source: author conception.

The competition requirement was based on the best creative idea of a social venture. The candidate must present a project of social venture that offers a solution for a social problem. The training process is a fusion of two alternative methods. The final presentation of their project must be constructed on three essential elements, which are: *a finding, solution and the impact* (Table 3).

First of all, the *finding* is the fact of the existence of a social problem. This first mission is to detect in their country a social issue that can be transformed into a change of mind in which the project brings a better life to the society. Secondly, the project must provide a *solution* for the finding. Creativity is well imposed in the conception of the solution. The candidate is supported during the training programme by a professional facilitator; the candidate learns to think out the box. Finally, the project must have an *impact* for both the individuals concerned and the community. In social entrepreneurship approach, the impact of a project is measured by a contribution to social value. This value gives the community more facilities in access to health services, energy savings, housing quality, reduction of unemployment, promotion of local consumption etc.

**Table3: «Social venture presented at Safirlab 2018 editions.»**

No	Finding	Solution	Impact
1	Educational system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating space where kids come and learn in workshop with mentors. - To learn more about programming. 	- Create a community or a generation of science and engineering innovator in Algeria in order for us to arrive to a better economy.
2	Young people and culture	Radio for independent art and alternative culture.	- To build the alternative society based on civic work, culture and art.
3	Increase quality of life	- Urban farming and organic food production.	- To enjoy healthy, organic vegetables.
4		- YUMMY app aims to solve and facilitate delivery and connecting with customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To enables the community to be more productive and to include women - To build a platform where customers can get delicious homemade food. - To push women towards financial autonomy while contributing to the social and economic well-being of society.
5	Pollution of the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To set up an urban sorting system in the new buildings - To install a garbage chute with three separate networks for each type of material. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To prevent waste set on fire in the streets in order to combat global warming in Jordan. - To protect environment.
6	Kids and female safely	Women's football academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Young Libyans can play without fear or constraint. - To change that idea, using football for fun, learning, and promoting gender equality
7	Young people suffer from unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To create a space for dialogue. - To offer a free training programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To attract young people and help them for a better life - Keep young people from social



No	Finding	Solution	Impact
	and are thus targeted by extremists who try to engage them.	from the radio station.	problems.
8	Needs of the heritage architecture of the past.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of the material 100% natural but which is innovative. - To offer an eco-responsible, sustainable, energetically efficient and low-cost solution to the housing problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To build up the heritage of tomorrow. - To protect the art of cultural architecture.
9	<p>The soil and water contamination.</p> <p>The poor waste treatment system</p>	Offering an ecological concept lab that uses biodegradable ingredients with essential oils to offer solutions that respect nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To raise awareness about responsible consumption by offering sustainable local products. - To protect environment.
10	Children right to play and safety from war.	<p>Developing a space in which children can have fun and learn.</p> <p>Offering them training assistance and tutorial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To help children to discover and to thrive. - To develop a new generation of strong children far from the war.

Source: author conception.



III. Results and discussion

Enhancing social entrepreneurship mean creating new generation of a social entrepreneur who plays a unique role as an individual contributor to sustainable development (Seelos & Mair, 2004). In this point of view, Safirlab helps young Arab becomes social entrepreneur; it trains them to act entrepreneurially, to invent, develop and achieve a new social practice in the society; and to become an agent of social innovation (Howaldt et al., 2015). Through this experience, candidates of the young social entrepreneur call will acquire a set of entrepreneurial behaviours to deliver social value to the less privileged (Abu-Saifan, 2012). Indeed, they will be able to transform the social dilemmas of the Arab region, especially from their own country into manageable problems solvable (Ziegler, 2011). The result obtained from the analysis of the ten cases shows that the candidates are succeed to develop the concept of the social venture at the end of the tanning. They present real social problems which exist in their countries, with the particularity of the Arab region. During this experience, one believes that the young entrepreneur achieves the ability to discover, define and exploit opportunities from the real social need of their country to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or innovatively managing existing organizations (Zahra et al., 2009). The first set of analyses investigated highlighted the impact of the Safirlab in guiding of projects presented in the 2018 editions. As we know, social venture creation consists of establishing an imaginary idea presenting a real opportunity to a feasible social project. According to (Table2 and Table3) the typologies of ideas that make the basis of all projects were classified into three kinds: the first one is about the *women and children rights*, the second is about *the pollution and protection of the environment*, and finally the third is about *quality and facility of daily life*. From the rate of young women candidate of the 2018 editions, one believes that there is a link between the social entrepreneurship intentions and the gender of the young entrepreneur trained and supported at the Safirlab experience. This fact attracts one reflection on the possibility of the considerable existence of a women social entrepreneurship intention in the Arabic region.

Conclusion

Even if the ten projects were taken from social ideas, the candidates make sure to study the concept of the venture with a managerial approach; they work on the business model applied to a social opportunity, and this is the challenge. Social entrepreneurship seeks to merge between a rational economic calculation and socially inspired vision (Lenssen et al. 2005). The ten candidates find new ways to create innovative products and services with a social vocation to respond for social needs which exist in their own country and that must be satisfied in order to achieve sustainable development. In this paper, one would like to indicate the most significant role of such experience in improving new entrepreneurship orientation. one trust the quality of projects presented at the final competition of Safirlab 2018



editions. This approves the hypotheses that one mentioned previously. To further the research, one plans to research on the women's social entrepreneurship intention.

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