Nurturing Women’s Entrepreneurship: perspectives from the UK and GCC

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Overview

• Share outcomes of two studies into women’s entrepreneurship
  – Identify attitudes
  – Understand the challenges
  – Comparison between UK and GCC

• Share best practice identified

• Make pledges for future work to support under-represented groups
London South Bank University
Total students 17,734

Mode of study
- 59% Full time
- 41% Part time

Gender split
- 57% Female
- 43% Male

Ethnic origin
- 40% BME
- 44% White
- 16% Not known

Age breakdown
- 20
- 21 - 24
- 25 - 29
- 30+
- 17%
- 25%
- 19%
- 38%
Arab Open University, Bahrain
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1996: Official Opening
HRH Prince Talal Bin Abdulaziz President of the Arab Gulf Development Programme (AGFUND)

2002: AOU strategic partnership with Open University, United Kingdom

Quick Facts:
AOU GCC countries: Jordon, Lebanon, and Egypt.
Headquarter: Kuwait
23000 students
12,000 graduates
50% female graduates
Nurturing Women: Igniting passion for entrepreneurship @LSBU

• Funded by Enterprise Education Research Project Fund

• **Aim:** “identify areas where we can increase enterprise and entrepreneurial engagement and in particular to encourage female entrepreneurs at LSBU to take their business ideas further.”

• **How?**
  – Create bespoke enterprise education interventions that better support under-represented groups at LSBU
  – Engage students in research activities
  – Produce a blueprint for engaging female students in entrepreneurship activities
  – Pilot a sector-specific peer support group
LSBU Activities

1. Identify challenges and barriers for STEM students

• Survey
  – 87 students completed the survey (22 females and 65 males)
  – Response rate of 12%.
  – Results:
    • Two thirds were aware of Student Enterprise at LSBU (60%)
    • Despite the small sub-sample sizes, it was evident that females were less likely to attend SE activities at LSBU than males.
    • Nearly two thirds would like to run their own business in the future (63%), and interestingly a greater proportion of females than males stated this, 82% compared with 57% respectively.

• Three focus groups
  – Two with engaged female STEM students and one with engaged male STEM students
  – Valuable insight into importance of role models for female students
LSBU Activities

2. STEMM Pilot

- Focus on the School of Engineering: most marked difference in terms of female/male student ratios.
- Delivered activities to raise awareness
  - IP activities embedded in the curriculum
  - Birthday celebration for Ada Lovelace (first female programmer)
  - New interdisciplinary work: Games Jam and a Wellbeing App.
LSBU Activities

3. Developing peer support Entrepreneurs Network

- Subject specific networking opportunities: ‘Diversity in Engineering’ event
- 2016-17:29th October during Black History Month.
LSBU Activities

4. Raise awareness

- Nathu Puri Institute (NPI) aims to ‘be an international centre of excellence for fostering innovation and enterprise in engineering education and practice’.
- Secured funding to revamp the Nathu Puri portal summer 2016 with student interns
- Interns will:
  - create enterprise case studies
  - showcase best practice and promote events with a view to raising awareness of entrepreneurship within the School of Engineering and beyond
LSBU Outcomes

• Student engagement in enterprise activities increased: engaged with over 5,000 students (approx. ⅓ of the student population)

• Increased proportion of female students taking part in our start-up an accelerator programmes
  – 2015/16, there were 45 participants in our start-up programmes, of which 20 were female (44%).
  – An increase of 10% when compared to 2014/15.
  – In 2016/17, first female President of South Bank Entrepreneurs (SBE)
Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) Study

Doctoral Study – Quick Facts

• Large sample size of female entrepreneurs operating in GCC countries
• Survey: 412 women approached, 397 completed online survey
• Interviews: 54 consented to interview but only 24 completed
• Communications sent by the entrepreneur networks
• Almost ALL female entrepreneurs were native to GCC (Support for International entrepreneurs not available at present)
• 65% of the women were married
Q & A
Future Collaborations

UK & Bahrain
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