

The Journey from a Workshop to a Published Paper in a Top International Journal by Nermeen Shehata, Department of Accounting

In 2019, I published an article entitled “Incorporating Nearpod in Undergraduate Financial Accounting Classes in Egypt”¹ in *Accounting Education* (A-ranked according to ABDC list). The journey to co-authoring this paper started with one workshop and two emails!

Back in 2015, I attended the “Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) to Improve Student Learning” workshop held by the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) on October 22 delivered by Aziza Ellozy and Hoda Mostafa. They discussed various techniques and tools that could be used for assessment including several online tools and platforms; one of them was called Nearpod.

On the following week, I emailed Dr. Aziza and asked her to put me in contact with a CLT colleague who can help me use Nearpod in my classes and provide me with further details. She put me in contact with Maha Shawki. I started using Nearpod in my financial accounting classes till the end of the Fall semester. Then, early in Spring 2016, I decided to know more about conducting Classroom Action Research (CAR) and sent the second email to Dr. Aziza to inquire about it. We had a meeting held with Caroline Mitry who provided all help on the potential CAR project about the impact of using Nearpod in financial accounting classes on students’ learning experience. I was told about submitting an application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) since the research involves surveys and questionnaires and got the approval promptly. Students were asked to fill in a survey and participate in a focus group facilitated by Caroline by the end of the semester. In Spring and Summer 2016, I presented an initial draft of the paper at *CLT 2016 Symposium*, and in a roundtable at the *Ninth Annual American Accounting Association (AAA) Conference on Teaching and Learning in Accounting (CTLA)*, respectively.

Caroline, Maha and I kept working on the paper until Fall 2016 and had the first version submitted to *Accounting Education* in February 2017. A ‘reject and resubmit’ decision was out in May 2017. Acknowledging the quality of the journal, we decided to work on all comments and feedback provided by the associate editor and reviewers. We also asked a dear colleague, Moataz El-Helaly, who was a visiting assistant professor of accounting at AUC and is currently an assistant professor at the American University of Beirut, to join the paper to handle the various requested statistical models and analysis based on his strong statistical skills. We then resubmitted the paper in November 2017. Various rounds of revisions took place during the two years 2017-2019 until it was finally accepted.

I would like to share with my colleagues several of the lessons I learnt from this experience:

First, attending CLT or any teaching development workshops/seminars/courses help provide new ideas.

Second, using/adding something new to the courses we teach every now and then is important since it could have a significant impact on the teaching/learning process.

Third, whenever this new idea proves that it works well in class, then it can be taken to the next step by having a CAR conducted with the help of CLT if needed, to provide evidence of its impact and disseminate results.

Fourth, a successful piece of research does not have to be coauthored only by faculty, it just needs experts in the field.

¹ The paper is available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/S5JTFFKGMYT3GG7SBBKE/full?target=10.1080/09639284.2019.1704806>

Fifth, I believe that we should never underestimate anything new that we do! When I presented the idea of using Nearpod in the CTLA of the AAA which is the top accounting conference worldwide, attendees were impressed with it where several of them didn't even know about it. Of course, there are many educational applications and tools, but still something different/new might be used in a course.

Finally, being persistent allowed us to work on several versions of the paper for more than two years where it finally landed in an A-ranked journal.

So, to sum up: attend professional development events and allow them to inspire your teaching. If experimenting with new approaches seems to make an impact, consider conducting a CAR, and consider collaborating with CLT in the process. Disseminating such experiences, whether at conferences or journals, can be helpful for other people to try innovative ideas in their classes.