



**Fayoum University
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**The Effectiveness of a Suggested Service Learning - Based
Program for Teaching Contemporary Issues to Education
College History Majors in Developing their Futuristic
Thinking Skills and Awareness of these Issues.**

**A Dissertation
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Introduction:

The world today is invaded by a new revolution which is called the "third wave" which is a combination of an amazing technological progress and the excessive information revolution which led to a new revolution in a next stage to the agricultural and industrial revolution. This new revolution is characterized by the great speed in comparison to the previous revolutions which caused dangerous changes in the world i.e old jobs and specializations are eradicated and new jobs and specializations are established every day. It is clear that the treasures of the countries are not measured by what natural sources they have but by the minds of scientists and thinkers who design knowledge in order to achieve knowledge national income that protects its independence and sovereignty. The progress axis that we observe in many countries of the world is undoubtedly the thinking human mind that presents the applicable theory that leads to producing everything which develops the human life.

The importance of teaching and learning thinking in light of the knowledge explosion, technological development and the challenges of information age increases as thinking helps the youth to investigate the alternatives, compare them and evaluate them in a way that enables him adapt, explain the events around him and predict what will happen in the future . Moreover, teaching and directing thinking is an essential target that can not be delayed. It has to be one of the main educational goals for any academic course as it is closely connected to all academic courses with their

teaching methods, activities, educational aids and evaluation processes.

History is a rich field for developing thinking skills of learners, as it teaches them the ability to identify the problems and solve them by using thinking skills and tools of problem solving . History is not only recording the past events but it tries to explain the development that occurred to nations and different civilizations and the reasons why it happened through showing the connection between the events and the causes that led to them . This requires searching for the history material, collecting, analyzing, organizing and criticizing it internally and externally. Studying history (**as seen by Grave & Avery, 1997**) represents a rich field for developing complex thinking skills of the pupils and helping them to face the increasing problems of the world today.

Future thinking is considered one type of thinking that requires previously learned information processing in order to foresee the future horizons.

The future thinking is connected to many mental skills performed by the learner and the psychomotor skills which require using the mind and the clever performance of these skills. Due to the importance of future thinking, the educational policies committee in the united states of America in 1961 declared that the aim which is more important than all educational aims is developing the ability to think for the future and the need of the students to think for the future effectively and to overcome future problems.

In Europe, attention has increased to future studies so, a center for future studies in Paris was established and a ministry for the future was established in Switzerland in 1973 that was a part of the cabinet of ministers. Moreover, there were many future studies in education approaches. Zinglar & Marien presented many studies and approaches by which a view of future education can be identified.

The age we live in requires that any individual becomes aware of the issues and problems of his society as the utmost ambition of the individual in our age is to be a truly effective citizen that requires an amount of complicated knowledge and comprehensive, wide and deep skills.

Knowing the important issues which are related to the events of the society requires an individual who has high mental abilities in order to think, discuss, create and give a clear decision in taking decisions all of which represent the best in the human life.

Contemporary issues are the critical contemporary problems which result in the changes happening in the world and affect the society negatively and positively. They are also the issues that express political, ethical, economical, social and cultural problems that are contemporary and have many opinions and views and can be dealt with in history curricula.

Since awareness of the contemporary issues that the humanity faces today must be based on the historical knowledge in order to deal with these issues so a great responsibility is put on history curricula which due to its nature and aims of teaching, history studies the present in the near and far past.

Studying history is a precondition for political intelligence. Without history, the society has no common memory about its position in previous ages, central value and about decisions that have been taken in the past and are still valid at present. This study is indispensable for the citizen in his public life and also for the individual in his private life as the historical memory is the key for the personal identity for seeing the human subject in time and the links that connect all the humanity. The study of (**Magdy Aziz Ebraheem: 2008, 96**) declared that one of the ingredients of the adequate citizenship on both local and national levels is that contemporary issues and events take enough time of study. Therefore, those events and issues have to take a prominent position in education curricula as the events and issues of the world in all essential fields of life.

One of the aims of teaching history is developing awareness of events and historical issues either that happened in the past or at present with the possibility of expecting the future in light of understanding these issues.

In light of what was previously mentioned, it is clear that developing future thinking skills of students helps them understand contemporary problems and issues and helps them acquire the ability to handle these issues and analyze them in order to foresee the future horizons and therefore we can consider it a means by which the students can understand what goes on in their society and be aware of the issues and contemporary events and this can be one of the main aims of teaching contemporary issues and problems and developing awareness of them.

What was previously mentioned can be achieved through using modern teaching approaches and strategies in teaching history on the one hand and paying attention to teaching contemporary issues and developing their awareness on the other hand.

The need to activate teaching history to achieve its aims is urgent as in spite of the development of the history study greatly internationally and the use of different approaches and teaching methods that help the students acquire many future thinking skills, yet it is clear through studying the status quo of teaching history in our schools that the educational aims are not achieved because of using only the traditional methods that depend on memorizing and recalling that don't lead to acquiring skills especially future thinking skills.

What emphasizes the inadequacy in the teaching methods followed in teaching history the way many studies try to get out of this problem by searching for new strategies and teaching approaches.

Thus, the researcher tried in the recent research to relate the results of previous studies and the emphasis of new trends in teaching history as related to using modern strategies and teaching approaches in teaching history and paying attention to teaching the contemporary issues for developing awareness of these issues and future thinking skills.

Examples of these strategies and teaching approaches that have been presented by educational thinking lately are the

strategies that depend on the active role of the learner, his activity in making connections, conclusions, compromises and reaching rules and applying what they have learned in their life. These strategies and approaches undoubtedly aim at developing the power of creativity of the learner and getting him from receiving information to building information, handling it and changing it into knowledge represented in discovering relationships, reflecting knowledge, understanding and explaining it in depth, exploring the dimensions of the phenomenon and discovering its hidden dimensions through a whole system of research and investigation.

Because the basic aim of teaching and learning is not only learning theoretical lessons or carrying out a group of activities during the academic year, so the need is to form an integrated scientific experience basis through which the students can acquire future thinking skills and develop their awareness of – some contemporary issues in order to adapt with life and overcome their future problems especially that knowledge is retainable if acquired through organized educational experiences which are connected and integrated. This requires the use of approaches and strategies that enable the student to interact with the issues and phenomena and contemporary problems.

The service learning strategy is considered one of the teaching strategies that aim at supporting the student's role in the educational situations. The basic theory of service learning is attributable to the American educationist John Dewy who suggested since the beginning of the twentieth century the necessity of concentrating on

the learner's personal experiences and forming new educational experiences to him which achieves education in terms of quality and quantity. The ideas of John Dewey were represented in putting the learners in an educational situation through providing sensory experiences inside and outside classrooms and consequently preparing them for a fast changing world in which they live now and in the future.

The service learning is also considered a teaching strategy by which the student can apply knowledge and skills in authentic life situations since experience is the basis for the learning process that is carried out not only by reading books in closed classrooms but by opening doors and windows of experience for the student where the learning process starts with a problem or an issue that faces the student and occupies his thinking which helps him to use organized information precisely and make use of objective and experimental observation in gathering ideas, and organizing them to overcome the problem.

The service learning also is a regular chance for the students to reflect, write, speak about what they learned during practicing different activities in the educational situations which enables the students to express their feelings, attitudes, awareness, assessment for what they did.

Many educationists indicate the importance of service learning in developing the pupil's abilities, and providing them with different **skills such as:**

- Different thinking skills.

- Participation and decision taking skills.

Social communication skills development:

- Citizenship skills.
- Decreasing behavior problems of students.
- Developing social responsibility and awareness.

The problem of the research:

The problem of the present research was represented in the low level of contemporary issues awareness and future thinking skills of faculties of education, history section student teachers and this was confirmed by many previous studies.

The problem of the present research can be stated in the following main question:

What is the effectiveness of a proposed program based on civil learning for faculties of education, history section students on developing future thinking skills and contemporary issues awareness?

This main question is branched into the following sub questions:

- 1- What are the appropriate contemporary issues for history section student teachers?
- 2- What are the appropriate future thinking skills for history section student teachers?
- 3- How far are these skills available in the sample of the research?
- 4- How far are contemporary issues awareness dimensions available in the sample of the research?

- 5- How will a proposed program based on service learning for the sample of the research be like?
- 6- What is the effectiveness of the proposed program using service learning in teaching contemporary issues on developing future thinking skills of history section student teachers?
- 7- What is the effectiveness of the proposed program using service learning in teaching contemporary issues on developing history section student teachers' awareness of these issues?

Delimitations of the research:

The present research was limited to the following **delimitations:**

- 1- Some contemporary issues required for history section fourth year students which are (citizenship, political participation, terrorism, social justice). The researcher used Delphi technique to identify these issues.
- 2- History section fourth year students at the faculty of education, Fayoum University.
- 3- Some future thinking skills which are important to History section students at the faculty of education such as (anticipation skill, imagination skill, prediction skill, future problem solving skill).
- 4- The study was carried out in 2014- 2015.

The tools of the research:

The tools of the research were represented in:

First: Educational material and evaluation tools:

- 1- Contemporary issues list (Prepared by the researcher)
- 2- Future Thinking skills list (Prepared by the researcher)
- 3- The Proposed Program (Prepared by the researcher)
- 4- student teacher book (Prepared by the researcher)
- 5- Teacher's guide. (prepared by the researcher)

Second: Evaluation tools:

- 1- Future thinking skills test (prepared by the researcher).
- 2- Contemporary issues awareness test. (prepared by the researcher).

The aims of the research:

The present research aimed at:

- 1- Identifying the effectiveness of a proposed program in teaching contemporary issues using service learning in developing future thinking skills for history section student teachers.
- 2- Identifying the effectiveness of a proposed program for teaching contemporary issues using service learning in developing history section student teachers' awareness of these issues.

The significance of the research:

The significance of the research is that it may help **in:**

- 1- Providing teachers of history with some strategies and new teaching approaches in the field of teaching history which

helps in achieving the aims of the subject and developing their teaching styles.

- 2- Developing some future thinking skills that are difficult to develop using the other teaching approaches and strategies.
- 3- Presenting a test for measuring future thinking skills that can be the starting point for a standardized test.
- 4- Presenting a test of students' awareness level of contemporary issues.
- 5- Developing awareness of historical issues and contemporary problems of student teachers.
- 6- Presenting history to the student teacher in an authentic and functional way that helps him to think for the future and develops his ability in problem solving skills.
- 7- Presenting an operational model for how to prepare a program in contemporary issues using service learning.

The hypotheses of the research:

The research aimed at verifying the following hypotheses:

- 1- There is a significant statistical difference between means of scores of the experimental group students in the pre- post administrations of the future thinking skills test in favour of the post administration.
- 2- There is a significant statistical difference between means of scores of the experimental group students in the pre- post administrations of the contemporary issues awareness test in favor of the post administration.

The method of the research:

The present research used the following methods:

- 1- **The analytical descriptive method:** In the theoretical framework of the research and in building the program and research tools.
- 2- **The experimental method (one experimental group):** In identifying the effectiveness of a proposed program based on service learning in developing future thinking skills and contemporary issues awareness.

The procedure of the research:

The research followed the following steps:

- 1- Surveying foreign and Arabic studies and researches that dealt with contemporary issues, service learning and future thinking.
- 2- In order to answer the first question of the research questions which is:

What are the appropriate contemporary issues for history section student- teachers, the researcher did the **following**:

- Preparing a questionnaire on contemporary issues.
- Displaying the questionnaire to a group of jury members specialized in history and curriculum and instruction to judge if they are appropriate.
- Preparing a list of appropriate contemporary issues for history section student- teachers at faculties of education.
- Displaying the list to a group of jury members specialized in curriculum and history instruction to judge its suitability.

3- In order to answer the second question of the research questions **which is:**

What are the appropriate future thinking skills for history section student teachers? The researcher did the following:

- Preparing a future thinking skills list which is appropriate for history section student- teachers.
- Displaying the list to a group of jury members specialized in curriculum and instruction to identify its suitability for application.

4- In order to answer the third research question **which is:**

- How far are these skills available in the sample of the research?
- Preparing a future thinking skills test and controlling it scientifically.

5- In order to answer the fourth research question **which is:**

- How far are the dimensions of contemporary issues awareness available in the sample of the research?

The researcher did the following:

- Preparing a contemporary issues awareness test and controlling it scientifically.

6- In order to answer the fifth research question which is:

How will a proposed program based on service learning for the sample of the research be like?

The researcher did the following:

- Surveying the previous literature related to how to build and design educational programs.

- Surveying studies, previous Arabic and foreign studies that dealt with service learning, contemporary issues and future thinking.
 - Building the proposed program using service learning approach.
 - Displaying the program to a group of jury members and specialists in curriculum and history instruction to identify its suitability for application and make adaptations in light of the views of jury members.
- 7- In order to answer the sixth research question and seventh research question which are:

What is the effect of the proposed Program Using The service learning in teaching contemporary issues and developing future thinking skills of history section student teachers? And what is the effectiveness of the proposed program using service learning in teaching contemporary issues on developing history section student teachers awareness of these issues?

The researcher did the following:

- Selecting the sample of the research who are history section, fourth year students.
- Administering pre tests of future thinking skills, and contemporary issues awareness to the sample of the research.
- Teaching the proposed program of the sample of the research.
- Administering the post tests of future thinking skills and contemporary issues awareness to the sample of the research.
- Collecting, treating and statistically explaining the results.

- 8- Presenting recommendations and suggestions according to the research results.

The results of the research:

In light of the previous procedure of the research, the following results have been reached:

- 1- There is significant a statistical difference between means of scores of the sample of the research in the pre and post administrations of future thinking skills test at (0.01) level favoring the post administration. This shows that the marks of the sample of the research were better in the post administration than in the pre administration which indicates the effectiveness of the proposed program based on service learning in developing future thinking skills.
- 2- There is a significant statistical difference between means of scores of the sample of the research in the pre- post administrations each one of the future thinking skills separately at (0.01) level of significance favouring the post administration.

This shows that the scores of the sample of the research in the post administration in each future skill thinking skill separately in this test (anticipation skill, imagination, prediction, and future problem solving) were far better than their scores in the pre administration.

This shows the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning for faculty of education students in developing future thinking skills.

From what was previously mentioned, the research proved the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning for faculty of education students in developing future thinking skills.

- 3- There is a significant statistical difference between means of scores of the sample of the research in the pre- post administrations of the contemporary issues awareness test at (0.01) level of significance favoring the post administration.

This shows that the scores of the sample of the research in the post administration were far better than the pre administration. This indicates the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning in developing contemporary issues awareness.

- 4- There is a significant statistical difference between means of scores of the sample of the research in the pre- post administrations in the contemporary issues awareness test each dimension separately (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) at (0.01) level of significance favoring the post administration.

This shows that the scores of the sample of the research in the post administration in each dimension in the test separately (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) were far better than the pre administration. This indicates the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning for the faculty of education students in developing the three dimensions of contemporary issues awareness (cognitive, affective, psychomotor).

This indicates the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning for the faculty of education students in developing contemporary issues awareness.

Finally, the results of the present research indicated the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning for teaching contemporary issues for history section students at faculties of education in developing future thinking skills and awareness of these issues. Thus, the main aim has been achieved.

Recommendations of the research:

In light of the results of the research, the researcher recommends the following:

First: recommendations for students:

- 1- Including contemporary issues and foreseeing the future in social studies curricula in general and history in particular and also training students on future thinking strategies from primary stage to university stage.
- 2- The necessity of developing future thinking skills and contemporary issues awareness of students while preparing social studies and history teachers and encouraging students to criticize positively and discuss things.
- 3- Drawing the attention of teachers to change strategies and methods of learning from receiving information into building, handling, and turning information into knowledge, then turning from the knowledge stage to metacognitive stage by discovering its dimensions and explaining it through research and investigation.

- 4- Paying attention to evaluating students during and after teaching to identify points of strength to support them and points of weakness to solve them.

Second: recommendations for student teachers:

- 1- Developing teacher preparation programs "history section" at faculties of education in light of aims of education for the future and individual preparation for the coming century.
- 2- Drawing the attention of social studies and history supervisors in the teaching practice to use evaluation standards with student teachers that show how far they use teaching strategies that aid understanding.

Third: recommendations for curriculum developers and planners:

- 1- Providing developers and designers of curricula with research results that proved the effectiveness of the proposed program which is based on service learning of the faculty of education students in developing future thinking skills and contemporary issues awareness to help them develop curricula and methods of teaching in light of this research.
- 2- Providing authors of history books with lists of future thinking levels and skills that resulted from modern educational studies to make use of them and include them in history text books prepared for different stages and also training teachers on how to make their students acquire these skills.
- 3- Providing authors of history books in general education stages with educational research results that proved the

effectiveness of using service learning to help them reorganize the content of these books according to the strategy with its procedure to facilitate students' learning.

- 4- Reorganizing history courses to include exercises and activities that help students acquire future thinking skills.
- 5- Inviting developers of faculty of education courses to include courses that prepare history section student- teachers to use most recent teaching strategies through methodology and micro teaching.

Fourth: recommendations for university staff members:

- 1- Training pre and in service teachers on using service learning strategy in order to train their students on its procedure and steps during teaching process and connect courses with the social environment around the students.
- 2- Providing preparation programs for teachers with modern teaching strategies in general and service learning strategy in particular as its use is not confined to only one subject or one field.
- 3- Preparing guides for in service history teachers to train them on how to use service learning strategy by following the operational steps to carry out this strategy.
- 4- Following up history section student teachers at faculties of education to use modern teaching strategies during teaching history topics to their students during teaching practice.
- 5- The staff member should assign students to perform tasks using future thinking skills and training them continuously under his / her guidance.

Suggestions of the research:

In light of the results of the research, the researcher suggests the following:

- 1- The effectiveness of a training program for history teachers to provide them with future thinking skills and develop their students' attitude towards the future.
- 2- Evaluating social studies curricula in basic education stages in light of future trends.
- 3- Preparing a student teacher program using future foreseeing methods and its effect on future issues and problems awareness development.
- 4- The effectiveness of a proposed program based on service learning for teaching contemporary issues in developing critical thinking and citizenship skills of student teachers.
- 5- The effectiveness of a proposed program using service learning in teaching history on developing academic achievement and social interaction skills of secondary stage students.
- 6- Preparing research that deal with teaching strategies and methods that can contribute to develop future thinking skills and contemporary issues awareness of history section and social studies students at the faculty of education.
- 7- The effectiveness of a proposed program using cognitive and metacognitive strategies for teaching contemporary issues on developing future thinking skills and awareness of these issues for secondary stage students.

- 8- The effectiveness of a proposed program using service learning in teaching history on developing social responsibilities and decision making skills of history section student teachers.
- 9- The effect of interaction between content presentation and intelligence style in developing future thinking skills and future issues awareness of history section student teachers.

