

**"The impact of studying abroad on developing Faculty teaching assistants' professional development and global mindedness"**

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**Abstract :**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of studying abroad in developing the professional development and global mindedness of teaching assistants in the Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University. Based on the literature review and related previous studies to studying abroad, professional development and global mindedness, the researchers designed two main instruments to measure both professional development and global mindedness for the participants of the study. Data were collected via professional development scale and interviews conducted on the participants who were involved in studying abroad programs in Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University. Results indicated that both professional development and global mindedness were significant for the participants due to studying abroad.

**” تأثير الدراسة بالخارج للمعيدين والمدرسين المساعدين على التنمية المهنية لديهم والانفتاح العقلي العالمي ”**

**• مستخلص البحث :**

يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة تأثير الدراسة بالخارج على مستوى التنمية المهنية والانفتاح العقلي للمعيدين والمدرسين المساعدين بكلية التربية جامعة عين شمس، لذلك فان البحث يجيب على الأسئلة الآتية، أولاً: ما الاختلافات بين أعضاء هيئة التدريس بكلية التربية الذين سافروا الى الخارج والذين لم يسافروا في مستوى الانفتاح العقلي العالمي لديهم؟، ثانياً: الى أي مدى اثرت الدراسة في الخارج على أعضاء هيئة التدريس بكلية التربية في تنميتهم المهنية؟، وللإجابة على هذه الأسئلة صمم الباحثان مقياس الانفتاح العقلي (من إعداد الباحثان)، ومقابلة شخصية لقياس التنمية المهنية لدى أعضاء هيئة التدريس (من إعداد الباحثان). وقد توصلت الدراسة الى: وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في ابعاد مقياس الانفتاح العقلي العالمي الأربعة الأولى وهي المسئولية، والتعددية الثقافية، والمشاركة المجتمعية، والكوكبية، وعدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين عينة البحث في بعد الترابط والتواصل. ومن خلال التحليل الكيفي لأسئلة المقابلة الشخصية الخاص بالتنمية المهنية لأعضاء هيئة التدريس توصل الباحثان الى وجود تحسن ملحوظ نتيجة سفر أعضاء هيئة التدريس الى الخارج على تنميتهم المهنية ومستواهم الأكاديمي والتربوي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدراسة بالخارج، الانفتاح العقلي العالمي، التنمية المهنية.

**Introduction**

In recent decades our world has become more connected and our classrooms more diverse. (Gay, 2002) There is an increase in the need to develop ourselves in terms of professional development and global mindedness to try to decrease the gap between the third world countries and the

developed ones. Thus, one of the most important tasks facing faculty members in general and teaching assistants in particular is appropriately preparing themselves for the 21st century skills represented in the continual professional development and global mindedness. An approach that may be enhanced via studying abroad.

### **Literature review**

Study abroad can be defined as all types of educational programs that students and other learners do outside the geographical borders of their home countries (Kitsantas, 2004). In other words, it is the experience that includes spending time in another country for several reasons such as developing language skills, increase knowledge and skills of another country, improve global understanding, collecting data about some topics in the field, examining the other country's culture, etc. (Lecrom, Greenhalgh, Dwyer, 2015).

Golay (2006) considers study abroad to be an umbrella term for educational programs, both credit and non- credit, that takes place outside of the boundaries of the home country. Such activities may include classroom study, research, internships, externships and service learning.

The opportunities to study abroad were seen as a privilege in the past or in other words, a kind of welfare and prosperity and only taken by students and learners who usually belong to economically and socially upper classes. But, now and as the job market has become more globalized and requires more skills and knowledge as well as dealing with diverse people from different countries, the view to studying abroad has been changed from being a privilege to a necessity not just to a specific class but to all (Hansen, 2010).

Indeed, study abroad has several benefits which depend on several factors including the length of the program, faculty led vs independent study, and immersion into the

local culture (Hendrickson, 2015). Those benefits may include language development (Rice, 2014), improved academic performance (Brakley, 2013; Lou & Jamieson-Drake, 2015; Rice, 2014; Yu, 2008), foreign experience (Chang, 2013), personal development (Barkley, 2013; Smith, 2013, Yu, 2008), social interactions (Clarke III, 2009; Yu, 2008), and increased employability (Chang, 2013; Clarke III, 2009).

On the other hand, there are some barriers to participation in study abroad. Internal barriers affect a student's participation in study abroad may include lack of cultural knowledge, language skills, family support, and cultural bias (Irani, 2006). External barriers include financial constraints, time commitment, and conflict with other classes (Irani, 2006).

Though few researches have been conducted to examine reasons behind why students decide to study abroad either for short or long time, it is clear that those students are characterized with being independent and willing to take risks as they decide to leave their home countries which in a way or another represent their own comfort zone and move to another place which is completely unfamiliar to them

(Lecrom, Greenhalgh, Dwyer, 2015). As studies have revealed that when comparing students who studied abroad to those who did not, study abroad students are reported to have better intercultural communication skills; more engaged in the concerns of the policies of their countries; more open to cultural diversity. (Lecrom, Greenhalgh, Dwyer, 2015).

Also, numerous studies have emphasized that study abroad programs may contribute in developing students' cross cultural development (Kitsantas, 2004); other studies have examined the impact of study abroad on behavioral outcomes (Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011), teaching

transformation (Sandgreen, Elig, Hovde, Krejci & Rice, 1999), and academic achievement (Dwyer,2004; Fry, Paige, Jon, Dillow& Nam,2009; Reddon,2010). Most of these studies have focused on short term impact as Franklin (2010) stated that “study abroad outcomes assessment is routinely conducted immediately following a participant’s return from abroad or shortly after graduation” p.169. In fact, this type of studies of short term impact is mainly conducted when examining study abroad in terms of outcomes related to language learning, changes in beliefs, or attitudes about language learning and culture. In contrast, researches on the impact of study abroad on issues like professional development, developing global citizens, global mindedness or behavioral issues require a long term outcome. However, no study has examined the impact of studying abroad on both professional development and global mindedness in Egypt to the best of the knowledge of the researchers.

Many researchers may think that study abroad is typically regarded as a primary vehicle for building and enhancing students’ global competence. Also many academically educational institutions see that studying abroad is a “high-impact educational practice” because it best prepares students to meet the challenges of living in an increasingly globalized and interdependent world or in more general sense studying abroad may produce global citizens. (Murphy, et al, 2014).

Moreover, study abroad may be considered one of the ways that enable students to increase their global knowledge which, in turn, may lead to make them enter the workforce with a global perspective (Wingenbach etal, 2003). And from an academic perspective, students’ engagement in education abroad experiences enhance global learning and development, which is now considered by many educators

to be the core of holistic student development, a goal of almost every undergraduate college or university” ( Braskamp, 2009, p.111).

In fact, over the past five years in Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University, the number of students and scholars who have been moved to study abroad whether for short time or long time has been increased. This increasing number of students who are involved in short or long term programs abroad have led to questions of the effect of studying abroad on different elements and aspects. Two of the most important aspects are professional development and global mindedness; which are considered by the researchers to be the two main broad goals from studying abroad.

Global mindedness is defined by Hansen (2010) as “a worldwide in which one sees oneself as connected to the world community and feels a sense of responsibility for its members. This commitment is reflected in an individual’s beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (p.4). “In other words, to be globally minded, one should share a common sense and duty as well as responsibility to all people in the world regardless of any other concerns with an overall aim to improve people’s lives and conditions focusing on issues of accepting the diversity of cultures. Therefore, a global minded person is the person who does not think in terms of his own concern, but in terms of what’s good for the global community and have a sense of awareness and appreciation of the interrelatedness of all people and nations). According to Hett (1993), global-mindedness consists of five dimensions: responsibility, cultural pluralism, efficacy, globalcentrism, and interconnectedness

Hendrickson (2015) added other components for global mindedness that include world mindedness, international mindedness, world view, global citizenship, and global

perspectives. The question becomes how to measure the global mindedness of an individual. In the current research, the researchers adopted Hett (1993) global mindedness scale that include the five main components mentioned above with minor adjustments to fit the participants of the research.

On the other hand, Professional development is defined as “the process of improving staff skills and competencies needed to produce outstanding educational results for students” (Hassel, 1999). As Thomas Guskey (2000, p.4) states, “One constant finding in the research literature is that notable improvements in education almost never take place in the absence of professional development. “Professional development is key to meeting today’s educational demands.

### **The purpose of the study**

In an effort to add to the body of research that exists in this regard, the purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Ain Shams University, Faculty of Education teaching assistants’ study abroad in developing their professional development and global mindedness.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were addressed in this research:

1. Are there any differences in the development of Faculty of Education’s teaching assistants' global mindedness due to studying abroad?
2. Are there any differences in the development of Faculty teaching assistants' professional development due to studying abroad?
3. To what extent is the effectiveness of studying abroad in developing Faculty of Education’s teaching assistants' professional development and global mindedness?

### **Hypotheses**

The study was guided by the following research hypotheses:

1. There will be a significant difference between the global-mindedness of Faculty of Education's teaching assistants who studied abroad and those who did not study abroad.
2. There will be a significant difference between professional development of Faculty of Education's teaching assistants due to studying abroad.

### **Significance of the study**

This study is of great significant as it attempted to examine study abroad programs in terms of their effect on both the professional development and global mindedness of the faculty teaching assistants to better provide and overall evaluation of such programs and suggestions and recommendations of better benefiting from them in the future.

### **Methodology**

#### **Participants of the Study**

Participants of the study included 20 teaching assistants from Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University, half of them have participated in studying abroad programs either sponsored by Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University or any other international sponsors. Participants' age ranged from 25 to 30 years old. This may indicate that they all belong to the same generation and same psychological and developmental traits.

#### **Design of the Study**

This study made use of the mixed research design that mixes both qualitative and quantitative designs together to better meet the purpose of the study. The participants of the study were limited to teaching assistants of the faculty of education, Ain Shams University.

#### **Instruments of the Study**

These two instruments were used in this study:

##### **1. Global mindedness scale**

This scale was adopted by the researchers from Hansen (2010). It included 20 items that were written in both

English and Arabic to better make it easier for the participants to fully understand each item. The scale measures the participants overall global mindedness and was administered on two groups; the first group consisted of 10 teaching assistants in the Faculty of Education, Ain shams University who participated in a study abroad program for at least one semester. The second group consisted of 10 teaching assistants from the same Faculty and University who have not participated in any study abroad programs before. The scale is divided into five main components that reflect its theoretical dimensions: responsibility (items 5,8,20), cultural pluralism (items 1,6,9,10,14,17), efficacy (items 2,11,15,18), globalcentrism (items 3,12,19) and interconnectedness (items 4,7,13,16).

**Table (1) points out the global mindedness scale adopted by the researchers**

Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1	لا اتفق بشدة = ١
Disagree (D) = 2	لا اتفق = ٢
Unsure (U) = 3	غير متأكد = ٣
Agree (A) = 4	اتفق = ٤
Strongly Agree (SA) = 5	اتفق بشدة = ٥

Dear respected Please respond to the following scale honestly and clearly. This is just used for research purposes and not to evaluate you. Write the number that matches you best beside each statement as bellows:

يرجى من حضراتكم الاستجابة لعبارات المقياس التالية بكل صدق وشفافية ، حيث ان هذا الاستبيان سيستخدم فقط من اجل الاغراض البحثية ، برجاء كتابة الرقم الذى يتفق مع استجاباتك فى الخانة المناسبة وفقا لدرجات الميل التالية :

	Item	SD 1	D 2	U 3	A 4	SA 5
1	I generally find it stimulating to spend an evening talking with people from another culture. أنا عموما أجد لدى حافز لقضاء امسية فى الحديث مع أناس من ثقافات اخرى.					



2	Really, there is nothing I can do about the problems of the world. فى الحقيقة لا يوجد لدى أى شى ممكن أن أفعله تجاه المشكلات المختلفة بالعالم.					
3	The needs of my country must continue to be our highest priority in negotiating with other countries. احتياجات بلدى يجب ان تكون لها الأولوية العليا عند التفاوض مع الدول الأخرى.					
4	I often think about the kind of world we are creating for future generations. أنا دائما ما أفكر فى طبيعة العالم الذى نعدده وننشئه للأجيال القادمة.					
5	When I hear that thousands of people are starving in a poor country, I feel very frustrated. عندما أسمع أن الآف الناس يتضورون جوعا فى إحدى البلاد الفقيرة، اشعر بالإحباط الشديد.					
6	Egyptians can learn something of value from all different cultures. يمكن أن يتعلم المصريون شى ذو قيمة من كل الثقافات المختلفة.					
7	I think of myself, not only as a citizen of my country, but also as a citizen of the world. أفكر فى نفسى ، على اعتبار أنى لست مواطنا فى بلدى فقط ، بل مواطن فى العالم أيضا.					
8	When I see the conditions some people in the world live under, I feel a responsibility to do something about it. عندما أرى الظروف المعيشية الصعبة التى يعيشها بعض سكان العالم ، اشعر بالمسئولية لعمل شى تجاه ذلك.					
9	I enjoy trying to understand people's behavior in the context of their culture. أنا استمتع عندما احاول فهم سلوكيات الناس فى سياق ثقافتهم.					
10	My opinions about national policies are based on how those policies might affect the rest of the world as well as my country. تستند أرائى عن السياسات القومية على كيفية تأثيرها على بقية العالم بما فيهم بلدى.					
11	I encourage others to choose a career in which they can have a positive effect on the quality of life for future generations. أشجع الآخرين على اختيار المهن التى تكون لها تأثير إيجابى فى نوعية وجوده الحياة للأجيال القادمة.					

12	My country values are probably the best. قيم بلدي ربما تكون هي الافضل.					
13	In the long run, my country will probably benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected. على المدى البعيد ربما تستفيد بلدي من حقيقة أن العالم أصبح أكثر اتصالاً.					
14	It is important that Egyptian universities and colleges provide programs designed to promote understanding among students of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. من المهم أن توفر الجامعات والكليات المصرية برامج تهدف إلى تعزيز التفاهم والتواصل بين الطلاب من خلفيات عرقية وثقافية مختلفة.					
15	I think my behavior can impact people in other countries. اعتقد أن تصرفاتي وسلوكياتي يمكن أن تؤثر في الناس في بلاد أخرى.					
16	I feel a strong kinship with the worldwide human family. اشعر بالقرابة القوية مع العائلات الانسانية في جميع أنحاء العالم.					
17	It is important that we educate people to understand the impact that current policies might have on future generations. من المهم أن نثقف الناس ونوعيهم لفهم تأثير السياسات الحالية ليس على الحاضر فقط بل على الأجيال القادمة.					
18	I am able to affect what happens on a global level by what I do in my own community. أنا قادر على التأثير في العالم من خلال ما أفعله في مجتمعي.					
19	I incorporate issues about the world in my teaching whenever I have a chance. أنا ادمج قضايا ومشكلات من أنحاء العالم المختلفة في تدريسي كلما سنحت لي الفرصة.					
20	I don't give too much attention to people's religion, culture, ethnic background or gender. أنا لا اعطى اهتمام كبير لخلفيات الناس الثقافية أو الدينية أو العرقية أو نوعهم.					

### **The professional development interview**

To verify whether there was an improvement in teaching assistants' professional development due to the study abroad programs , a professional development interview was designed by the researchers in this regard.

### **The goal of the interview**

This interview aimed at measuring four aspects related to teaching assistants' professional development which included:

- Basic and personal information about the teaching assistants.
- Teaching assistants' experiences obtained from studying abroad.
- Teaching assistants' reflections on their academic mobility obtained from studying abroad and their point of views regarding how it can be improved.
- The real effect of such international academic mobility on the faculty teaching member after coming back from studying abroad.

### **The description of the interview in its final form**

In order to achieve the previous goals, an interview was conducted on the ten participants of the study who have participated in study abroad programs. The interview consisted of 11 questions covering the four previous elements; three questions for basic and personal information about the faculty teaching member. one question on faculty teaching member's experience in the exchanging academic program. five questions on their reflections of the international academic exchange program; and two last questions on the actual effect of the international academic exchange program on faculty teaching members after their return to their home universities.

**Table (2) points out the professional development questionnaire designed by the researchers:**

Questionnaire sections	questions
Section one: Basic and personal information about the faculty teaching member.	Please, talk about yourself. : What are the reasons that pushed you to make the decision of studying abroad? What's your opinion about the academic and social arrangements made by the host university?
Section two: your experience in the exchanging academic program.	What are the experiences you obtained from the exchanging academic program between Ain Shams University and your host university?
Section three: The third part of the questionnaire: the final reflections of the international academic exchange program	What are the personal and professional experiences you obtained during your studying abroad program? What are the factors that helped you in achieving the previous positive results? What are the challenges and obstacles you confronted during your studying abroad program? How can you employ the acquired skills and knowledge obtained during the study abroad program? What are your recommendations to improve the international academic exchange program between your home university and other international universities?
Section four: the actual effect of the international academic exchange program on faculty teaching members after their return to their home universities.	What are the changes that took place in your teaching practices after your return to your home universities? : would you like to add anything else?

## **Results and Discussion**

In this section, the researchers attempted to answer the research questions and verifying the hypothesis of the study and this was done through the qualitative and quantitative treatment of the instruments of the research after administering them on the participants of the research.

To answer the first question and verify the first hypothesis, the researchers adopted a scale for the global mindedness and administered it on both the control group

represented in ten teaching assistants from Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University who have not participated in any studying abroad programs and the experimental group represented in ten teaching assistants from Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University who have participated in any studying abroad programs for at least one semester. Results came as follows:

dimensions	The experimental group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Critical value(t)	P-value
responsibility	experimental	20	12.50	1.50	3.69**	0.002
	Control	20	9.80	1.75		
cultural pluralism	experimental	20	27.80	1.75	7.76**	0.000
	Control	20	22.10	1.52		
efficacy	experimental	20	14.50	1.50	5.21**	0.000
	Control	20	11.00	1.49		
global centrism	experimental	20	11.70	1.41	3.39**	0.003
	Control	20	8.80	2.29		
interconnectedness	experimental	20	15.30	2.31	1.09	0.288
	Control	20	13.90	3.31		
dimensions a whole	experimental	20	81.80	3.79	7.78**	0.000
	Control	20	65.60	5.37		

Based on the statistical analysis for the global mindedness scale results, the researchers found out that there are statistically significant differences for the first four dimensions of the scale: responsibility , cultural pluralism , efficacy , globalcentrism and this may be due to the open mindedness gained by the teaching faculty members in their studying abroad programs which in turn lead to their own understanding to the western culture which had an emphasis on their effective participation in the community.

Also, the researchers found out that there is no statistically significant difference in the interconnectedness dimension of the global mindedness scale. The researchers think that this may be due to the short period that most of the teaching faculty members spent in their studying abroad programs.

To answer the second research question and verify the second hypothesis, the researchers conducted an interview with the ten participants represented in the ten teaching assistants from Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University who have participated in any studying abroad programs for at least one semester. Results came as follows:

### **The qualitative analysis of the professional development interview**

The first section of the interview: basic and personal information about the faculty teaching member. The first question: please, talk about yourself. This question aimed at identifying the professional background of the participants as well as their own basic and personal information.

The second question: What are the reasons that pushed you to make the decision of studying abroad? Most of the reasons were as follows:

#### **Personal reasons**

- Improving the English language skills.
- Curiosity and entertainment.
- More self-confidence and self-reliance.

#### **Professional reasons**

- Identifying the foreign universities' experience in the field of teacher preparation.
- Identifying and making use of the actual potentials of the foreign universities.
- Identifying educational systems and different curriculum.
- Identifying the recent trends in the field of specialty.
- Collecting data for MA and Ph. D dissertations.
- Consulting the professors of those international universities regarding their own researches.
- Taking benefits from the data base of the libraries.
- Enhancing their research skills.
- Transferring the professional experience, they get to their home universities.

- Practicing the English language.
- Living in a unique educational environment.

The third question: what's your opinion about the academic and social arrangements made by the host university. The aim of this question was to measure the support presented by the academic mentor and the host university to the faculty teaching members as well as their participation in the host university community. The answers were as follows:

### **The academic mentor**

- Presented all means of support to the faculty members during their visit to their host university such as giving them books, references and letting them attend lectures, workshops, seminars and parties.
- Giving them an opportunity to teach in the host university.
- Helping them apply their questionnaires of their theses and dissertations
- Doing joint research with some professors of the host university

### **The host university**

Having the access of the electronic data base of the host university library which enabled faculty teaching members to download materials for their dissertations.

### **The second section of the interview: your experience in the exchanging academic program**

The fourth question: what are the experiences you obtained from the exchanging academic program between Ain Shams University and your host university. The aim of this question was to identify the expectations of the faculty teaching member before traveling abroad and the ones they had whether positive or negative. Most of the answers came as follows:

### **Expectations**

Some of the participants had expected to have difficulty regarding issues of adaptation due to the different

environment represented in different language, culture, and religion, and this was one of the reasons that pushed them away from accepting to live with host families during their studying abroad period.

### **Positive experience**

- Most participants have confirmed that they gained great positive skills and experience in different fields such as: Language, scientific research, teaching techniques and methods...etc.
- Dealing with the society easily despite differences in language, culture and religion.
- Attending lectures that made them sense the gap between education in the host university and their home university.

### **Negative experiences**

Some participants have encountered difficulty in some issues such as language, traditions and customs of the host university society but they could overcome such issues through attending language courses and engaging more in the community.

### **The third part of the interview**

reflections of the international academic exchange program. This part aimed at identifying the personal and professional experience obtained by faculty teaching members due to their studying abroad program as well as determining the challenges they had and how could they employ their obtained experience in their home universities.

The fifth question: what are the personal and professional experiences you obtained during your studying abroad program? Their answers came as follows:

- Language skills: most participants stated that their language skills have been improved.
- Research skills: participants could identify the most recent qualitative and quantitative research method.
- Increasing their self-awareness, self-skills, and social communications skills with others.



- Coexisting and adapting effectively in their host university community
- Acquiring some social communication skills through interacting with many students from different nationalities.
- Developing their teaching skills and transfer this experience to their colleagues at home.
- Having a positive view regarding using democracy with their students represented in allowing students to express their opinions freely and respect such opinions.
- Believing in team work as both a life style and work style.
- Enhancing their theses and dissertations by collecting recent data on their researches.

The sixth question: what are the factors that helped you in achieving the previous positive results? Their answers came as follows:

- Participants have already communicated with their mentors ahead before their travel.
- Participants have been well prepared before their travel.
- The effective cooperation of all members of the host university with the participants.
- The personal desire of the participants to improve themselves.
- The support of the host university administration and its flexible system.
- The support of the academic mentors.
- Attending lectures in their fields which had great effect on being acquainted with recent trends in their fields.
- The overall friendly atmosphere of the host university community.

The seventh question: what are the challenges and obstacles you confronted during your studying abroad program? Their answers came as follows:

- The language and difficulty in communication.

- The cultural differences and the fear of not well coexisting and adapting in a community that has different norms and lifestyle.
- The severe cold weather which is completely different from that of their home countries.
- The short period of the studying abroad program which made participants under pressure to finish their so many tasks within the time limit of the program.

The eighth question: how can you employ the acquired skills and knowledge obtained during the study abroad program? Their answers came as follows:

- Most of the acquired skills and knowledge are reflected in their teaching practices.
- Improving their lesson plan skills and tools.
- Involving cooperative learning strategies in their teaching practices.
- Effectively employing technology in their classes.
- Using participation and interaction in their teaching practices.
- Designing syllabuses for their classes and acquainting students with their duties and responsibilities and what they are supposed to do in advance.
- Working on spreading the awareness of writing researches in English to be able to publish them overseas.
- Working on spreading the culture of working in research teams whether on the sides of faculty members or students.
- Conducting recent research methods learned during their studying abroad program.
- Working on cooperating with professors from international universities.
- Changing and updating some subjects in light of the new skills and knowledge they acquired during their studying abroad program.

- Running some seminars on the new trends and knowledge in their fields.

The ninth question: what are your recommendations to improve the international academic exchange program between your home university and other international universities? Their answers came as follows:

- Setting criteria to select the host international universities specially to have enough professors in the fields of the candidates.
- Setting clear criteria for selecting candidates.
- Evaluating candidates during and after their studying abroad program to get the most possible benefits of the program.
- Spreading the awareness of traveling abroad to know different cultures and the latest developments in their fields.
- Working on exchanging researchers within a clear strategy to make sure that the goals of such programs are achieved.
- Working on saving the funds for such studying abroad programs to give the opportunity to many researchers to have this experience.

#### **The fourth section of the interview**

The actual effect of the international academic exchange program on faculty teaching members after their return to their home universities.

The question tenth: what were the changes that took place in your teaching practices after your return to your home universities. Their answers came as follows:

#### **Teaching philosophy**

Their teaching philosophy has been changed as they are now believing in:

- Involving students in the learning process by making them the center of this process and encouraging them to self-learning.
- Using extra-curricular activities in their classes.

- Creating an atmosphere of fun in the learning process.
- Giving learners the opportunity to express their opinions freely through creating a motivating environment in the classroom and the change of the teachers' role to that of facilitators and guides.

### **Scientific research**

- Relying on qualitative researches.
- Reviewing latest trends and approaches in the fields.

### **Educational aids**

- Employing and using the most recent applications of technology in the learning and teaching process.
- Using documentaries in classrooms.
- Using mobile phones in the learning and teaching process.

### **Curriculum development**

- Working on developing curriculum to cope with the international curriculum and the latest trends in designing textbook to reduce the gaps between the Arab world and the western world.
- Preparing course descriptions and syllabuses for all the courses taught in their home universities.
- Pay more attention to student's social activities such as sport, cultural and scientific trips.
- Transferring the culture of volunteering from the host university to their home university.
- The continual communication with students and researchers and providing them with the materials they need.
- Doing orientation sessions and workshops for the candidates before they travel to reduce the costs of the host university administration which requires extra money to spend on providing candidates with extra work outside the university.

The eleventh question: would you like to add anything else?

- The international academic exchange program should exceed at least 6 months.
- This program should continue to achieve its goals regardless of the cost spent.
- The awareness of traveling abroad should increase among faculty teaching members.
- The number of candidates should be at least 2 to better support each other and reduce the feelings of alienation.
- More attention should be given to the English language of the candidates by providing them with enough courses and training before they travel.

### **Recommendations**

- Changing the policy of scholarships by setting agreements with international Prestigious universities and working on continuing such scholarships.
- Holding orientation sessions and workshops to teaching faculty members about the importance of such scholarships as well as motivating them to participate in the studying abroad program.
- Saving enough funds for these scholarships.
- Setting criteria to select the host international universities specially to have enough professors in the fields of the candidates.
- Setting clear criteria for selecting candidates.
- Evaluating candidates during and after their studying abroad program to get the most possible benefits of the program.
- Spreading the awareness of traveling abroad to know different cultures and the latest developments in their fields.
- Working on exchanging researchers within a clear strategy to make sure that the goals of such programs are achieved.
- Working on saving the funds for such studying abroad programs to give the opportunity to many researchers to have this experience

## **Conclusions**

In light of the results of the research, the researchers found out that studying abroad had an impact on the faculty of education, Ain Shams University's teaching assistants. As the findings of the global mindedness scale indicated that the first four dimensions of the scale: responsibility, cultural pluralism, efficacy, globalcentrism which may be attributed to the openness to the Western cultures. Also, the qualitative analysis for the professional development interview indicated to a large extent that most of the participants who have been to studying abroad programs have developed their professional development due to several factors which were highlighted earlier in the research.

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