



EFFECT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (EL) IN TEACHING SOCIAL SCIENCE

Dr. S.Karthiyayeni

Principal & Associate Professor in Education,

R.V. Teachers College, Jayanagar, Bangalore-11

Abstract: Experiential Learning is a very effective approach to teach methodology wherein learner learns best through experience. It is designed by David .A. Kolb and defined by greatest psychologists such as John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget and L.S Vygotsky. According to David .A. Kolb it is the process of learning through experiences and specifically defined as “Learning through reflection on doing”. In a broader sense, it is the application of theory and academic content to real-world experiences either within the classroom. Experiential learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting.

Index Terms - Experiential Learning, Teaching and Learning, Reflections, Direct Experiences

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning is the relatively permanent change in a person’s knowledge or behavior due to experience.) the duration of the change is long-term rather than short-term; the locus of the change is the content and structure of knowledge in memory or the behavior of the learner; the cause of the change is the learner’s experience in the environment. Learning is the transformative process of taking in information that when internalized and mixed with experiences, changes the knowledge and what is to be gained. It’s based on input, process, and reflection. This changes an individual permanently. Learning is also the acquisition and mastery of what is already known about something, the extension and clarification of meaning of experience, or an organized, intentional process of testing ideas relevant to problems. Experiential Learning is a powerful way to help people identify changes required to their skills and behaviors, then implement those changes for better performance. Experiential learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting. Experiential learning (EL) is the process of learning through experience, and is more specifically defined as "learning through reflection on doing". Hands-on learning can be a form of experiential learning, but does not necessarily involve students reflecting on their product.

1.1 BACKGROUND: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning is, quite simply, learning by doing. All learned to walk or talk, not by being shown or told, but by practicing and refining the techniques. EL develops personal understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes through the analysis of, and reflection on, an activity. Consequently, trainers and facilitators can implement this method in all sorts of situations with people from all walks of life. There are no barriers due to age, education, experience, ability, background or culture. Experiential learning is an active process which engages the learner, not a passive process that happens to the learner. In experiential learning the experience provides the platform for learning, whilst the careful analysis and reflection of the experience develops the learning. When we use this approach in classroom, the learner is actively involved in the process of learning. The reason for the effectiveness of experiential learning is it provides physical environment to understand the concept in depth. In a nutshell, it immerses learners with a particular experience and later encourages the reflection of that particular experience to enhance and also to learn new attitudes, unlearned skills and divergent thinking.

Experiential learning is typically designed by four-stage of learning cycle wherein the learner passes through one by one to have an experience bit by bit and learn ultimately. Namely, Concrete Experience, Reflective observation, Abstract Conceptualization and Active Experimentation. It encompasses internships, service learning, and other creative professional work experiences. Well-planned, supervised, and assessed experiential learning programs can stimulate academic inquiry by promoting interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional skills.

Experiential learning contains all of the following:

- Reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis.
- Opportunities for students to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results
- Opportunities for students to engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, or physically.
- A designed learning experience that includes the possibility to learn from consequences, mistakes, and successes.
- Combines direct experience with focused reflection;
 - Builds on past knowledge and experiences;
 - Requires active involvement in meaning construction;
 - Encourages collaboration and exchange of ideas and perspectives;
 - Can be course focused or in-class, community focused, or work focused.

Experiential learning requires the student to not only engage in the experience activity, but also requires them to reflect upon their learning and how their skills learned through their academic studies can be applied beyond the classroom.

2. METHOD OF RESEARCH:

Action Research was conducted to see the effect of experiential learning on B.Ed students. “To study the effect of Experiential (EL) in teaching Social Science among B.Ed students”

2.1 OBJECTIVES

- To use experiential learning in teaching social science
- To use EL in-teaching map drawing for social science method students.
- To develop mastery in drawing map of India.
- To become effective classroom teachers.
- To develop better teaching ability.

2.3 Definitions of technical terms:

- **Experiential Learning:** Experiential learning is the application of theory and academic content to real-world experiences.
- **Social Science:** Social science is, the study of society and the manner in which people behave and influence the world around us.

3. STUDY DESIGN:

3.1 Sample: A sample of 45 B.Ed students belonging to social science methods of teaching.

3.2 Design of the Study: The design of the present study is as follows:

- **Concrete Experience** Pretest (drawing of India Map)
- **Reflective observation** (Write the reflections of the drawing and also peer observation)
- **Abstract Conceptualization** (Teachers teaches the actual method of drawing map)
- **Active Experimentation** Post Test - (drawing of India Map)

3.4 Assessment criteria:

The map of India drawn by the students were assessed by themselves and their peer. Marks was allotted based on the review. This was considered as pre test marks and after teaching the actual way of drawing map again it was assessed by themselves and their peer, it was considered as posttest marks. The following criteria was followed for assessment by the student teachers.

- The shape and size of India on the full chart paper.
- Proportion of the drawing and usage of space.
- The colors used to draw the map
- Presentation and overall look of the map.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The student teachers were taught map drawing using experiential learning. The results were that in the first phase of concrete experience the student teachers drew the map but it was not appropriate. They had difficulty in judging the space to be utilized for drawing and it was not in the appropriate shape. The drawn map was assessed for 20 marks and the average score of the student teachers in the pretest was 5.1 out of 20. After the reflective observation and abstract conceptualization where in the student teachers were taught the right way to draw map, in the active experimentation station or post test they were able to draw in a right manner. Again, the map was assessed for 20 marks and the average score in the post test was 18.5 out of 20. 't' test was done to see the significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores, the results are as follows

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t	Level of significance
Pretest scores	45	5.1	9.58	6.3	Yes
Posttest scores	45	18.5	10.36		

The t test value is significant at 0.01 level of significance.

4.1 INTERPRETATIONS:

Teaching through experiential learning had effect on the student teachers of social science methods. There was significant improvement in the drawing of map of India. The B.Ed students reflected on their drawings and learnt to draw perfectly and was also motivated to draw other maps. Teaching through experiential learning brought significant difference in the pre- and post-test scores of the student teachers.

5. CONCLUSION

To speak about implications of this approach is that it avoids rote learning, paves way for thinking, provides first-hand knowledge etc. It is very useful learning in higher education also and lifelong learning with special regard to education where individuals learn easily and remember for long time as they involve completely in the process. Hence it is an indispensable resource for each and every one. It plays a vital role in Higher education, teacher training, learning of life skills, developmental organizational etc. Experiential learning develops:

- ability to immediately apply knowledge.
- Experiential learning helps to solve real-world challenges.
- Access to real-time coaching and feedback.
- Promotion of teamwork and communication skills.
- Development of reflective practice habits
- Teaches the value of mistakes
- Accelerates learning by engaging the student in the total process due to which retention improves.
- Self-discovery in the learning process guides students for a better future.

REFERENCES:

- Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- *Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education*, Volume 58, August 2016, "Extending experiential learning in teacher professional development" – Carina Girvan
- Linn, P. L., Howard, A., and Miller, E. (Eds). (2004). *The handbook for research in cooperative education and internships*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Moore, D. T. (2010). *Forms and issues in experiential learning*. In D. M. Qualters (Ed.) *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, New York City, NY: Wiley.
- Wurdinger, D. D., & Carlson, J. A. (2010). *Teaching for experiential learning: Five approaches that work*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Moon, J. (2006). *A handbook of reflective and experiential learning: Theory and practice*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.