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Research Article

Experiential Learning
A Real Source of Creativity among Students

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses experiential learning's effects on creativity. The extant research accepts that learning is occurring but needs to address the significance of learning in order to progress rightly. Learning is a reasonably long-lasting change in behaviour or knowledge owing to experience. Changes in behaviour, as a result of momentary functional deviations, are not learning. As the study's objective is to understand the varying phenomena of creativity among students, after going through the experiential learning, quantitative research was employed with a sample size of 150 students belonging to the Government and Private sectors, following Matric and Cambridge systems, girls and boys. This study provides empirical evidence that experiential learning positively and significantly impacts creativity (t=18.389), which is greater than the benchmark (t>2), followed by (sig-value=0.000), which is lesser than the benchmark of (sig<0.01). Despite many challenges, there was evidence to support the phenomenon that experiential learning is a reasoning and strategy in which teachers intentionally draw in students to expand information, creative abilities, and illuminate qualities. It also helps students develop intrapersonal skills while engaging in activities with diverse participants.

INTRODUCTION

Experiential Learning (EL) is a technique for learning. This kind of learning happens when students take an interest, reflect, and utilise investigative abilities to increase valuable knowledge and afterwards join these encounters into their day-by-day lives (Luckner & Nadler, 1997). Experiential Learning characterises learning as the procedure when that information is made from side to side with the experience change. Knowledge is the outcome of the mixture of grasping and changing experience (Kolb, 1984). The history of experiential learning starts with the effort of noticeable 20th-century intellectuals who believed experience played a pivotal role in their philosophies of students learning and development—notably John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Kurt Lewin, Carl Jung, Paulo Freire, Carl Rogers William James, and others—to build an all-inclusive model of the experiential learning process and a multiline model of adult development

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(Kolb, 1984). John Dewey, the modern father of experiential learning (Wheeler, 2008) Dewey's "theory of experience" believes the basics of experience come from the interaction of two people – the principle of continuity and interaction. Therefore, Dewey implies that every man's experience will impact today's experience and, thus, influence future encounters. Situational experience is the premise for Dewey's rule of interaction. Communication between the individual's past encounters and the current circumstances shapes a man's present experience (Wheeler, 2008).

Dewey states that everyone learns from the experience. For productive results, the facilitator must amply experiential perspective. Also, it is required to twist education into valued experiences that positively impact students so one, in turn, will make a helpful input in the future (Dewey, 2022). In Experiential learning, the initial learning system manages circumstances where people can pick up and apply information and abilities by drenching themselves in a significant setting. Expert preparing projects, for example, educating, social work, and designing, are normal for this structure. In the second learning system, people do not have the opportunity to learn in a proper reflection to set, yet learn on standard experiences. Dewey said that a teacher should consider the special contrasts between every student. Every individual is diverse genetically and in terms of past experiences. Notwithstanding, when a standard educational program is introduced utilising built-up pedagogical strategies, every understudy will have an alternate experience. In this manner, showing and educational modules must be planned to consider such people's differences (Schott & Marshall, 2021).

Dewey explained that education helps to accomplish broader social purpose. For example, it benefits people to be responsible and active citizens of the democratic system. However, a top-down, one-way delivery style of schooling can hardly make influential citizens in a democratic society. In contrast, an experiential schooling environment is needed to help each student be an equal, valuable and responsible citizen of society (Laub, 1999). Like traditional modes of education, experiential education offers a style of facilitating and learning that helps students keep learning outside the classroom (Stangel, 2021). It also encourages students to leave their comfort zone by putting them in different situations and settings. Further, this type of learning explores more creative ways of learning and acquiring knowledge. This type of learning creates a space that cannot fit the classroom setting as experiential education requires open space outside of the classroom format, a place unfamiliar and new for the student, beyond the predictability and comfort of the student's house, it could be a new culture, new country or any new society.

Most interestingly, experiential learning demands and pushes students into a challenging, complex, but interconnected world that makes students take responsibility for their continuous learning on a self-help basis and students come up with their proper learning objectives (Klippel et al., 2020). This type of learning could be evaluated based on writing, reading, presenting, or producing projects. This measurement is constructed on the direct involvement of the students, and thus, the measurement of the achievements is also based on direct experience. Thus, it will make students more aware of the things happening around them and positively change their behaviour (Morris, 2020; Rambaree et al., 2023).

Objective of the Study

The objective of the research was to find out if there is any relationship between experiential learning and creativity. How much experiential learning affects the development of creativity at the school level.

Scope of the Study

- Findings can be used to modify the methods of planning and delivering lesson plans at the school level to develop creativity.
- The strategies for teachers' development would be improvised based on results.
- New classroom student engagement strategies would be altered and modified.
- Different teaching aids would be used to enhance experience-based learning.
- Curriculum of subjects that demand practical work, such as Science and Social Studies, can be mapped to incorporate the experiential learning areas.

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Research Question

Is Experiential Learning a real source of creativity at the school level?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Experiential learning, the learner is a partaker rather than an observer. It happens when selected experiences with judgment are maintained by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis. Learning must have present and future significance for learners and the society they will contribute to. Experiential Learning refers to learning through experiences and providing reflection on doing (Kolb, 1984). It is an active rather than passive learning process, such as rote or didactic. Real work/life experiences and structured experiences can be used for experiential learning (Tharp & Rallimore, 1991). It can make the participants understand the content, technical and non-technical, and its activities can be used for cognitive, behavioural and affective learning (Moon, 2013). According to Wilson (2002), experience may strengthen all learning, but learning can or cannot always be the outcome. We have to be involved and reflect on what happened, how it happened, and why. Therefore, experiential learning can be stated as the route of getting knowledge through the conversion of experience (Ayob et al., 2011; Luckner & Nadler, 1997).

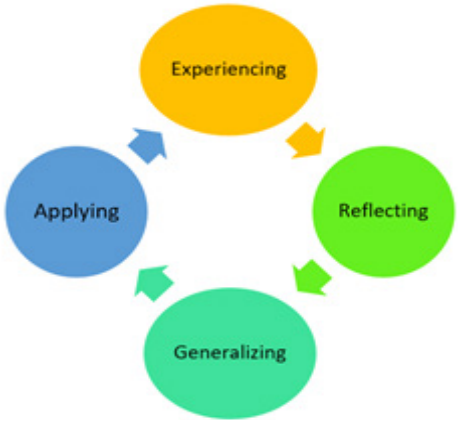

Fig. 1. Experiential learning Cycle

However, Creativity is the shift from imagination to reality. Creativity is to see the world in a way that has never been seen before, to find unseen patterns, to make links between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate solutions (Rambaree et al., 2023). Creativity comprises two processes: thinking and producing. Having ideas without implementation leads to being imaginative but not creative. Experiential learning inspires and attracts grown-up learners (Whitmire, 2000). Experiential learning is defined as " the process of creating and transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs, and senses (Karakas, 2011). It is the process through which individuals become themselves". As stated by adult learning research, for the past tens of years, college syllabuses in the United States relate experiential learning to support students in achieving learning conclusions, (Kolb, 1984) and it has been frequently proven that adults learn meritoriously through experience. However, the question remains: Does experiential learning lead to responsible behaviour in the long run?

Learning, as termed in Experiential learning theory, is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984). Kolb's theory proposes that learning is a reasoning route constantly linked to one's environment. Knowledge is not created by individuals just from receiving instruction but from experience. In his theory, Kolb discussed various learning styles, which mirror learning preferences that can vary with one's situation (Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Kolb, 1984), characterises the learning process in a repetitive model comprising four diverse learning styles: concrete, abstract, reflective, and active. As per Kolb (1984) the learning cycle commences with concrete experience; when students are deeply involved in the experience, they attempt to describe that experience coherently through thoughtful observation. In abstract conceptualisation, the second step is for the students to convert their experiences into understanding. Understanding assists in creating theories and strategies, which may be tested via active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). Kolb's model is attractive because it helps individuals understand different learning styles and describes a cycle of experiential learning that applies to everyone.

John Dewey, a significant contributor to experiential learning, comprehensively spent his many years of life of its importance to representative culture. Democracy and Education (Ueno, 2023) recommended that "since democracy stands in principle for free interchange, for social continuity, it must develop a theory of knowledge which sees the method by which one's experience is made available in giving direction and meaning to another" (p. 248). He debated for "a sound philosophy of experience" (Dewey, 1938, p. 91) with educators, specifically facilitators, linking learning to students' experiences and assisting students in comprehending through "cooperative enterprise, not dictation." (Dewey, 2022); and in the long run, aiding in group development of society as well as the development of individual judgment and exercise of power (Dewey, 2022).

Another researcher, Tara Fenwick, suggested that experiential learning encompasses many critical theoretical frameworks for student learning (Kennedy et al., 2010). Model of experiential learning, being highly effective, advocated constructing student learning experiences because students are primarily responsible for learning. Kennedy et al., (2010) describes that a significant notion of experiential learning is based upon reflecting on experience to form new understandings. (Kennedy et al., 2010) constructivist theory of learning points towards these experiences, reflected by learners on lived experience, are indiscriminate in developing mental structures. These stored knowledge structures can be expressed, represented, and transferred to new situations, depending upon the perception and interpretation of a learner (Caulfield & Woods, 2013). Education, based on experience cum reflection, will assist in shaping the present learner as a future leader by behaving creatively as per the real need of time and society (Ayob et al., 2012). One of the most important objectives of this quantitative research is to discover the possibility and thereby improve our understanding and awareness of how experiential learning education and activities can supplement a school's learners' engagement and awareness in and about creativity in the long run.

Conceptual Framework

The study would feature causal analysis using the regression analysis model.

Hypothesis

H_1: Experiential learning has a positive impact on creativity.

METHODOLOGY

The data collection process depends on the variables studied, considering time. This is primary data research with quantitative methodology. The data was collected from government and private school students studying under the Matric and Cambridge boards. The study included a quota sampling technique. 150 boys and girls were the respondents who used a 5-point Likert scale in the questionnaire. This research has two variables: experiential learning as an independent variable and Creativity as a dependent variable. All respondents are school-going students.

Statistical Technique

The linear regression analysis technique is used to measure the impact of experiential learning on individual creativity in school. The technique is considered appropriate for finding such relationships. Before applying this technique, a reliability test was also applied to calculate the reliability of the measurement instrument. All the analyses were done using the IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor. Pre-participant consent was taken before the respondents filled out the questionnaire. The survey stated, "This survey is purely for academic purposes. The anonymity of participants will be maintained at all times."

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DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Esti-mate
1	.834[a]	.696	.694	.24385
a. Predictors: (Constant), ExpL				
b. Dependent Variable: Creativity				

According to Table 1, R is a correlation measuring an 83.4% interdependency between experiential learning and creativity. The model's explanatory power is 69.6%, which shows that a change in the experiential learning score will translate into a 69.6% change in the creativity score. Moreover, R square and adjusted R square are very close, indicating that the sample size is adequate and sufficient.

Table 2
ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.108	1	20.108	338.150	.000[b]
	Residual	8.801	148	.059		
	Total	28.909	149			
a. Dependent Variable: Creativity						
b. Predictors: (Constant), ExpL						

The ANOVA table 2 shows that the goodness of fit of the model (coefficient of determination/ R-square) is significant as the F-value is 338.15, which is greater than the benchmark (F>4), followed by the probability value of 0.000, which is less than the benchmark (sig<0.01).

Table 3
Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.995	.146		6.835	.000
	ExpL	.781	.042	.834	18.389	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Creativity						

Table 3 demonstrates that a one-unit change in the experiential learning score brings a 0.781 unit change in the creativity score over a five-point Likert scale. This relationship is positive and significant as the t-value is 18.389, which is greater than its benchmark (t>2) followed by the sig value of 0.000, which is less than the benchmark (sig<0.01).

Table 4
Hypothesis Assessment Summary

Hypothesis	Sig value	Conclusion
Experiential learning has a positive impact on creativity	0.000	Supported

Discussion

This study aims to find out the impact of experiential learning on creativity. The study shows that experiential learning has a positive impact on creativity. The study shows that experiential learning and creativity are significantly correlated with each other, and the results are similar to the (Caulfield & Woods, 2013). The research shows that experiential learning and creativity are adjacent, respectively, results of (Kolb, 1984). The final results show that Creativity is not a characteristic that comes into play instantly; it is developed gradually, and experiential learning can be enhanced with time (Ayob et al., 2012).

CONCLUSION

According to the results, creativity has a statistically significant positive impact on students' creativity. The data were taken from 150 individuals who were studying in different schools. The model is

statistically significant, with F statistics at a significant level. While the adjusted R square value is even higher, it suggests including more variables for a comprehensive study. Furthermore, the results show that creativity also increases with experiential learning.

Limitations

This research is limited to experiential learning. Many more factors are involved in the students' learning. Some more factors could be added to this, i.e., resource allocation, study environment, more experiential mentors, and so on. The students' experiential learning will be maximised by focusing on these limitations.

Future Research

Like any other study, this also has some limitations. As discussed above, some more variables can be tested, and results can be discussed. Individual creativity is also subject to personal motivation and factors an employee influences. The new advanced model where the outside environment may be placed allows different positions to be brought in and tested. The data for this research is limited to only the schools in Karachi; it should be changed, and some other regions can also be considered and studied.

Competing Interests

The authors has declared that no competing interests exist.

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