



Experiential Learning

Thinking Out of the Box: Education Beyond the Classroom

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University of the East, Caloocan City Campus

Quotations

- I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. – attributed to Confucius
- One must learn by doing the thing, for though you think you know it - you have no certainty, until you try. - Sophocles' quote, 400 B.C.
- The great difficulty of education is to get experience out of ideas. - George Santayana
- It is hard to argue that experience will not lead to learning under the right conditions. However, it will be argued that the resultant learning can be in error unless care is taken to assure that those conditions occur.

Quotations

- Tell me and I forget, Teach me and I remember, Involve me and I will learn. ~ Benjamin Franklin, 1750
- There is an intimate and necessary relation between the process of actual experience and education. ~ John Dewey, 1938
- Most college faculty teach by lecturing because few of them learned how to teach otherwise. ~ Teaching for Experiential Learning, Wurdinger and Carlson (2010)
- Notable educational psychologists such as John Dewey (1859-1952), Carl Rogers (1902-1987), and David Kolb (b. 1939) have provided the groundwork of learning theories that focus on “learning through experience or “learning by doing.”

Definition

- “Experiential [learning] is a philosophy and methodology in which educators **purposefully engage** with students in **direct experience** and **focused reflection** in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values” (Association for Experiential Education, para. 2).
- Experiential learning is also referred to as learning through action, learning by doing, learning through experience, and learning through discovery and exploration

- Northern Illinois University
Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center

Learning from Experience

- “learning by doing” - John Dewey (Dewey and Dewey 1915)
- “experience-based learning” - Wolfe and Byrne (1975)
- “trial and error” learning - inductive learning processes
- “applied experiential learning” - AACSB Task Force (1986) - combining the learning from the “real-world” situation with the necessary condition of the application of concepts, ideas and theories to the interactive setting
- “experiential learning” – understood and used to cover the same domains as the other terms



Instructor Perspective

Four Phases of Experientially-Based Approaches

- Overall experiential learning task structure proposed by Wolfe and Byrne (1975)
- Design
- Objective – to lay the theoretical base so that the participant can view the experience in the desired context
- Involves – upfront efforts by the instructor to set the stage for the experience
- Includes – specification of learning objectives, the production or selection of activities for participants, the identification of factors affecting student learning, and the creation of a scheme for implementation

Four Phases of Experientially-Based Approaches

- Overall experiential learning task structure proposed by Wolfe and Byrne (1975)
- Conduct
- Objective – to better ensure that the experience is structured and closely monitored
- Involves – maintaining and controlling the design
- Includes – creation of a timetable for the experience, but also altering the original timetable and activities to sustain a favorable learning environment

Four Phases of Experientially-Based Approaches

- Overall experiential learning task structure proposed by Wolfe and Byrne (1975)
- Evaluation
- Objective – for participants to be able to articulate and demonstrate specific learning gained from the design and conduct of the experience
- Involves – evaluation conducted by the instructor; also provision of opportunities for students to evaluate the experience
- Includes – opportunities for reflection and documentation by the instructor and by each participant

Four Phases of Experientially-Based Approaches

- Overall experiential learning task structure proposed by Wolfe and Byrne (1975)
- Feedback
- Objective – to foster positive aspects and eliminate those features that are negative
- Involves – an almost continuous process from the pre-experience introduction through the final debriefing
- Includes – monitoring of the process by the instructor in order to foster positive aspects and eliminate those features that are negative; to the extent that we learn from our errors, the freedom to fail may be encouraged

Four Phases of Experientially-Based Approaches

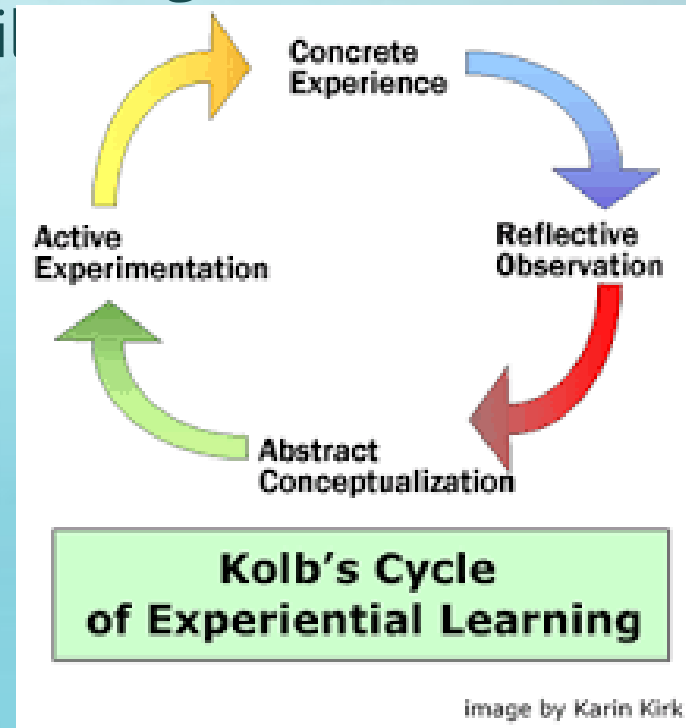
- Overall experiential learning task structure proposed by Wolfe and Byrne (1975)
- Learning will be best facilitated when all four phases (design, conduct, evaluation, and feedback) are present and repeated over time.



Student Perspective

Importance of Direct Experience for Learning Processes to Occur

- All genuine education comes from experience - Dewey (1938)
- Method of simulation and gaming also relies on direct experience, mediated through simulation games. It belongs to experiential learning as was outlined by Warner Weil (1989, p. 31)
- Learning is favoured when four steps are followed - Kolb (1984)
 - Concrete experience
 - Reflective observation
 - Abstract conceptualization
 - Active experimentation



Kolb's Four Steps

- Concrete experience
- Obtained either through real life or in a virtual environment
- Reflective observation
- After the experience, a phase of reflection follows. The experience is recreated internally in the minds of the participants and its many facets become apparent under different perspectives

Kolb's Four Steps

- Abstract conceptualization
- In this step, the experience is compared to existing theories and examined for structures, patterns and meanings
- In this way abstract concepts and new knowledge are created
- Note that knowledge is created at two steps within the cycle: here, and in concrete experience
- Knowledge from concrete experience stems from an external event, whereas knowledge created by abstract conceptualisation emerges as a consequence of an inner cognitive process

Kolb's Four Steps

- Active experimentation
- The new concepts lead to new strategies for coping with the reality
- New experiments are performed consciously to test the new knowledge in real situations
- This leads, again, to new experiences that continue the circle on a higher level of understanding

AACSB Task Force Memorandum

- Schools should emphasize the benefits of the extracurricular activities of students
- Activities offer a chance to develop their leadership skills experientially
- Schools should actively encourage student clubs to promote activities which involve student participation so that their speaking, discussion, interpersonal, and goalsetting abilities are developed



Recognizing Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Applied
- Experiences will not qualify as applied experiential learning without having the **expected educational outcomes articulated and related to the curriculum**
- Participative
- The student must be involved in the process; experiential learning is active rather than passive
 - Do role plays
 - Make decisions (as in a simulation game)
 - Perform an analysis of a firm's problems (as in a small business case project)

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Interactive
- More than just the instructor/student dyad
- Student/student, student/client, or student/environment interaction is required
 - Group decision-making in a simulation game
 - Presentations to clients in small business case projects
 - Conducting survey research of local households for a marketing research course project

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Whole-person emphasis
- Involves learning on the behavioral, affective, and cognitive dimensions
- Broader horizons offered by experiential learning approaches (as compared to more traditional teaching methods such as lectures and class discussion) are very beneficial in the learning of **people skills** and **technical skills**
- Among major expected benefits from experiential learning is the development of a student's interpersonal and other non-cognitive skills

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Contact with the Environment
- The term “experience” implies a **real world** contact (or at least a “real-world-like”) contact
- Simulated environments are intended to be analogous to the real **situations which students will face later**
- Different students will react quite differently to the same situational cue so the interaction **process should be monitored closely and processed well**

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Variability and Uncertainty
- One of the benefits of experiential learning is students get a feel for the “messiness” and ambiguity associated with real-world situations
- Organizational conflict when encountered in the team play of a simulation game and there is no one with the authority to reconcile the opposing views, the messiness associated with organizational conflict becomes very real; systems aspects may become clearer to students when they have to handle tradeoffs in a large-scale simulation game

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Structured Exercise
- Structured and monitored
- Insufficient autonomy may diminish willingness to participate
- If no guidance is provided, the experience may be largely meaningless in terms of the specific content area for which the instructor is responsible – “experience” by itself does not insure learning; the instructor has to insure that it is a **quality experience**
- Faculty time commitments to teaching usually increase (and increase substantially) rather than decrease when students become more participative in and out of class

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Student Evaluation of the Experience
- Students need to have the opportunity to articulate their thoughts and feelings as to what the experience is involving – the important perceptions of what is happening reside **within the student**
- A good measure of students' ability to integrate content and process is to have them critique the experience by specifying what should have occurred in the experience as opposed to what was actually involved

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Feedback
- Kelly (1955) described the process:
- The person who merely stands agog at each emerging event may experience a series of interesting surprises, but if he makes no attempt to discover the recurrent themes, his experience does not amount to much. It is when man begins to see the orderliness in a sequence of events that he begins to experience them. . . . From the standpoint of the psychology of personal constructs, **it is the learning which constitutes experience.**
- Most learning occurs through outcome feedback – an action is taken and we observe the outcome. In many cases, we judge the quality of the decision by the favorableness of the outcome.

Experiential Learning Characteristics

- Feedback
- Critical for proper learning to take place after an experience
- Debriefing session is crucial. Students need to articulate their perception of what was learned, and the instructor needs to put things into a broader perspective
- If students correctly uncover what the key variables are in the present exercise, discussion should probe whether those variables are also dominant in other situations
- Process feedback is much more valuable than outcome feedback
- It is the **decision process** used that needs to be applauded or critiqued

A serene landscape featuring a calm lake that perfectly reflects the surrounding environment. The water is a clear, light blue, mirroring the sky above. In the background, there are lush green mountains with dense forests, their peaks slightly hazy. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural. The text 'Experiential Learning Potential' is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the image in a dark teal color.

Experiential Learning Potential

Potential for Experiential Learning

- Low end
- Those with little or no experiential learning potential
 - Basic lecture
 - Seminar discussion
 - Library research paper

Potential for Experiential Learning

- Medium
- Those with some experiential learning potential
 - Problem solving exercises
 - Laboratory exercises
 - Experiential exercises
 - Case discussions
 - Study group discussions
 - Individual case write-ups

Potential for Experiential Learning

- High
- Those with increasing experiential learning potential
 - Group case assignments
 - Simulation games
 - Descriptive/analytic field projects
 - Consultative field projects

Potential for Experiential Learning

The following approaches may involve experiential learning

- Assessment centers
- Forums
- Group discussions
- Panel meetings
- Live cases
- Writing experiences
- Student-written textbooks
- Computer-assisted instruction
- Communication workshops
- Time management sessions
- Game show formats
- Learning cooperatives (where students take the responsibility for teaching themselves)
- Internship programs
- Job search preparation
- On-the-job training
- Field trips
- Cases

Internships

- Meet most criteria: participative, interactive, contact with environment, and variability/uncertainty
- Assumptions
 - A theoretical base of sorts should have been / is expected to have been presented prior to the time of internship.
 - Students are required to provide a written evaluation of the experience.
- Two criteria presenting problems are the structured exercise and feedback components
 - Controlling the nature of the experience requires extremely good university/business relations and a great deal of effort on the part of the faculty in charge.
 - As programs become successful, size problems often make them unsuccessful as administrative burnout occurs.
 - Given the distance problem cited earlier, process feedback is difficult. It is possible to require interim reports, but it is often difficult to monitor the student's learning as it takes place.
 - While internships are extremely high on the experiential scale, the quality of the learning involved may be suspect.

Live Case

- May be in the form of a small business case, a marketing survey research project for a local business, or the development of an advertising campaign for a firm.
- Example – a survey research project – done as part of the course requirements or as a follow-up course to a marketing research class. In either case, **prior or concurrent coursework has provided the theory base.**
- Project requirements – students need to determine the information needs, obtain background information, develop a questionnaire, pretest it, develop a sampling plan, collect the data, code them, enter them in the computer, analyze the data, write a report, and present it to the client.
- Participation and interaction are thus very prominent in the process, as is contact with the environment.
- The learning taking place involves the cognitive (especially in the questionnaire design and analysis stages), the affective (especially in the data collection stage), and the behavioral (in several stages) dimensions.
- The variability/uncertainty criterion is very much present, especially in the early stages when the students are trying to understand the nature of the problem being investigated.

Live Case

- Guidance from the instructor is crucial, both in the form of deadlines that insure the completion of the project by the end of the semester and in the teaching of content which will shortly be used in the research process.
- Students provide feedback at various stages, but especially at the data collection stage.
- Most learn about themselves as they contact time-pressured individuals who do not want to be bothered; rarely does a project take place without students wishing to share horror stories. **Relating such stories to the lecture material on differential response rates by various groups is straightforward.**
- The nature of the research process (questionnaire design, sampling, analysis) presents ample opportunity for the instructor to monitor the progress of the project. Moreover, such monitoring is crucial in order to assure that the client gets something of value at the end.
- The live case pedagogy would be classified as being very high in experiential learning potential.



Pros & Cons

Disadvantages of Experiential Learning

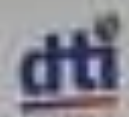
- A decentralized approach can seem less orderly, and it may be less comfortable to an authoritarian-style teacher
- It requires more preparation by the leader/teacher and may require more time for processing
- It requires patience and guidance by the instructor/facilitator
- There is often no single “right” answer

- Carl Rogers

Advantages of Experiential Learning

- Use of multiple senses can increase retention of what is learned
- Multiple teaching/learning methods can be integrated to maximize creativity and flexibility
- Student-centered learning becomes the focus
- The process of discovery of knowledge and solutions builds competence and confidence
- If students are more actively engaged in learning, they have a greater stake in the outcome of what they learn and are less likely to become discipline problems
- Students can learn life skills that will be used over and over

- Carl Rogers



BUREAU OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (DTI-MSMED)

ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

Regional Discussion on

ASEAN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

UP ISSI Teodoro Racion
E. Vivida Hall, E. Jacinto Street UP Campus, Diliman, Quezon City 1101
10 January 2014 (Friday)





International
internships





(was) Executive Director that prepared the PCS Information & Computing Accreditation Board (PICAB) for acceptance into provisional membership in the **Seoul Accord** (an international agreement for the mutual recognition of accredited computing- and information technology-related baccalaureate programs)

(is) Consultant to institutions preparing for evaluation by PICAB for possible accreditation in alignment with the Seoul Accord

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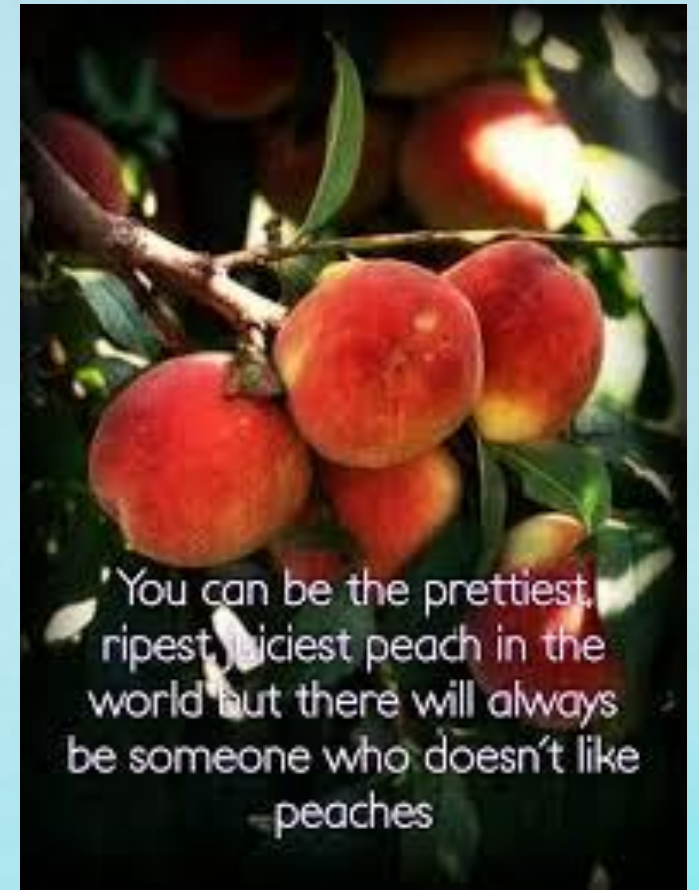
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You can be the prettiest,
ripest, juiciest peach in the
world but there will always
be someone who doesn't like
peaches

Thank you for your attention.

