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Experiential Learning In Middle Stage Education From The Precepts Of National Education Policy 2020: A Study Of Rajouri District

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Abstract

Experiential learning is a dynamic and student-centered teaching approach that emphasizes learning through direct experience, reflection, and application. Rooted in the educational philosophies of thinkers like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and David Kolb, experiential learning encourages active participation, where students engage in meaningful activities that simulate real-life scenarios. Rather than passively receiving information, learners are involved in exploring, experimenting, solving problems, and reflecting on their experiences to construct knowledge. Experiential learning occurs through activities such as playing outdoors, imaginative and creative expression through art, music and dance, exploration of nature and the child's surrounding environment. In this paper light is thrown on the teaching pedagogy used by the teachers to promote experiential learning in classroom at middle stage, identify the challenges faced by teachers during the conduct of experiential learning in the classroom at middle stage and suggest educational implications on the basis of the findings.

Keywords: *Experiential Learning, Middle Stage Education, NEP 2020*

INTRODUCTION

Experiential learning is a dynamic and student-centered teaching approach that emphasizes learning through direct experience, reflection, and application. Rooted in the educational philosophies of thinkers like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and David Kolb, experiential learning encourages active participation, where students engage in meaningful activities that simulate real-life scenarios. Rather than passively receiving information, learners are involved in exploring, experimenting, solving problems, and reflecting on their experiences to construct knowledge. In middle stage education, experiential learning plays a vital role in fostering curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. Activities such as hands-on experiments, storytelling, group projects, role-playing, field trips, and game-based tasks make learning engaging and effective for young learners. It also helps develop essential life skills such as communication, collaboration, and decision-making. This approach transforms the classroom into an interactive and inclusive learning environment where students take ownership of their learning journey. It bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical understanding, making education more relevant and enjoyable. As education evolves, experiential learning emerges as a crucial pedagogy for nurturing holistic development and preparing students for real-world challenges from an early age.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF RELEATED LITERATURE

The purpose of the literature review was to comprehensively investigate ideas, issues, and studies related to Experiential Learning in education.

Alkan (2016) conducted a study on effects of experiential learning model on student teachers achievement in chemistry as well as their scientific process skills. Findings of the study showed that experiential learning is effective approach on academic achievement and scientific process. **Gardener and Korth (1997)** used Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) to design a course in group dynamics, group development, and group

effectiveness. They found the experiential learning model enhances the learning process, reinforces the link between theory and practice, and facilitates the transfer of learning to the workplace. **Breuing (2005)** opined that the educational theories of experiential learning and critical pedagogy intersect in a number of ways. One of the intended aims of both of these pedagogies is that the purpose of education should be to develop a global society. He explored some of the ways for experiential educators and critical pedagogues to engage a more purposeful classroom that acts on the theoretical pedagogies as a means to work towards their shared vision of universal society. **Domesk (2007**) illustrated how experiential learning offers an educational experience that effectively connects the academics with the practice, posters and effective interdisciplinary curriculum, link students to work experience and job opportunities. **Kolb and Kolb (2009)** conducted a study on the learning way: Metacognitive Aspects of Experiential Learning'. The metacognitive model is used to describe how fundamental concepts of experiential learning theory – a leaning self identity, the learning style and learning spaces can guide metacognitive strategies to help individuals to improve their learning effectiveness. **Kolb and Kolb (2010)** proposed an experiential learning framework for understanding how play can potentially create a unique ludic learning space conducive to deep learning. The case study suggest that play in a ludic learning space can promote deep learning in the intellectual, physical, spiritual and moral realms. **Biswal. (2015)** focused on learner centered method i.e experiential learning, phases of experiential learning, benefits of experiential learning and discussed that learner centered approach should be adopted to keep the learning happily. **Wurdinger and Allison (2017)** Conducted a study on "Faculty Perception and use of Experiential Learning in Higher Education." For the study an eighteen question qualtrics –survey was created to collect data on faculty perception on experiential learning. Findings of the study showed that faculty ae at least experimenting using students. Presentation, Collaborative learning and project based learning in some of their classes.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Middle stage education is direly needed to be seen through preview of effective teaching and providing experiential learning to the children. The new education policy 2020 focus on hands on experience i.e experiential learning, innovative learning, and creative way of learning. In which child acquire certain skills and get mastery over it which is helpful for future also. NEP 2020 from the foundation stage, preparatory stage and middle stage give focus on learning by doing and experiential learning, learning based on fun activities. In the section 4.3 of NEP 2020 it recommends cognitive development of child through curricular and pedagogical design. Sec 4.7 of this policy talks about critical thinking, holistic, discovery based, discussion based and analysis based learning. The NEP 2020 recommends that classrooms should be based on more fun, creative, collaborative and exploratory activities for more experiential learning. NEP 2020 also emphasis on integration of vocational education and internship from grade 6 onwards. This is to equip students with new skills i.e learning based on hands-on experience. Carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making etc. are to be introduced during 6-8 grades, as decided by the states and local communities. This is to ensure that at least50% of the students by 2025 has comprehensive exposure to vocational education. In all stages experiential learning will be adopted, arts integrated, sports integrated, story- telling based pedagogy within each subject and with explorations on the relations among different subjects. To close the gap in achievement of learning outcomes, classrooms transactions will shift towards competency-based learning and education. (Divyasethi, 2020). This NEP overall thrust on reforms in curriculum and pedagogy to move the education system towards real understanding at all the levels and to remove the culture of rote learning as is largely present. Experiential learning within each subject, and exploration of relation among different subjects will be encouraged. (Divyasethi, 2020). Many studies have been conducted on experiential learning like **Voulkelatou** (2019) conducted a case study on the contribution of experiential learning to the development of cognitive and social skills in secondary education. The results of the study shows the significant impact of experiential learning on acquiring knowledge and developing social skills. **Puri (2019**) in a research paper on A review of the National Education Policy government of India- The need for data and Dynamism in the 21st century. He focus on the teaching students life skills through experiential learning and subject diversity, review effectiveness of different education in India, enhancing and propagating vocational skill education and supporting

accountability(www.papers.ssrn,com). No study has been conducted on experiential learning and National Education Policy 2020. Thus, it is an attempt by the researcher to choose the topic- Experiential learning in the middle stage education from the precepts of national education policy 2020: A study of Rajouri District.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

1. To highlight the teaching pedagogy used by the teachers to promote experiential learning in classroom at middle stage.
2. To identify the challenges faced by teachers during the conduct of experiential learning in the classroom at middle stage.
3. To suggest educational implications on the basis of the findings.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

1. What are the teaching pedagogies used by the teachers to promote experiential learning in classroom at middle stage?
2. What are the challenges faced by teachers during the conduct of experiential learning in the classrooms at middle stage?

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

Descriptive survey method has been used in the present study. The investigator has randomly taken 25 government middle schools in district Rajouri and selected two teachers from the selected Government middle schools of Rajouri district by using simple random sampling. The sample of the study is 50 teachers

TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY

The investigator used self structured interview schedule for teachers to get data from teachers. The validity and reliability of the interview schedule was done. Face validity and content validity was found by the subject and language experts. Inter rater reliability of the interview schedule was also established by the investigator.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For achieving the objectives of the study, the investigator done content analysis of the data.

Analysis based on objective no. 1: To highlight the teaching pedagogy used by the teachers to promote experiential learning in classroom at middle stage.

Table 1: *Teaching pedagogy used by the teachers to promote experiential learning in classroom at middle stage.*

S. No	Teaching Pedagogy	Percentage
1	Lecture	100
2	Discussion	50
3	Storytelling	48
4	Demonstration	28
5	Collaborative	12
6	Problem Based	18
7	Inquiry Based	16
8	Blended	10
9	art and craft	44
10	Montessori	12
11	Game based	78
12	Role play	64
13	Brainstorming	28
14	Simulation	24
15	Field Trips	12

Interpretation:

The data presented in the table highlights the prevalence of various teaching pedagogies used by teachers at the elementary level, with significant variation in their adoption. Unsurprisingly, **lecture-based teaching**

remains the most dominant pedagogy, used by 100% of teachers, indicating a strong reliance on traditional methods despite the growing emphasis on student-centered learning. However, the table also shows a considerable use of **game-based learning (78%)** and **role play (64%)**, suggesting that many teachers are incorporating engaging and interactive methods to enhance student participation and experiential learning. **Discussion-based teaching (50%)** and **storytelling (48%)** are also frequently used, reflecting efforts to foster communication skills and make learning more relatable for young learners. Interestingly, **Art and craft employed by 44% of teachers**, which, while promising, indicates that more than half still do not regularly apply it, possibly due to constraints such as time, training, or resources. Pedagogies such as **demonstration (28%)**, **brainstorming (28%)**, **simulation (24%)**, and **problem-based learning (18%)** are used to a lesser extent, even though they are highly effective in promoting critical thinking and real-world application. **Inquiry-based learning (16%)**, **collaborative learning (12%)**, **Montessori methods (12%)**, and **field trips (12%)** remain underutilized, which may be due to challenges in planning, classroom management, or lack of institutional support.

Finally, **blended learning (10%)** shows minimal use, possibly because of limited access to digital tools or training in using technology effectively. This data implies that while some progressive and experiential approaches are gaining ground, a large portion of teaching still revolves around traditional methodologies. To truly embrace experiential learning, there needs to be a more balanced integration of diverse pedagogies that cater to varied learning styles and developmental needs of elementary students.

Analysis based on objective no. 2: To identify the challenges faced by teachers during the conduct of experiential learning in the classrooms at middle stage.

Table 2: *Challenges faced by teachers during the conduct of experiential learning in the classrooms at middle stage.*

S. No	Problems	Percentage
1	Time Constraints	100
2	Limited Resources	42
3	Curriculum Rigid	48
4	No proper PTR	94
5	Less Training Programmes	34
6	Less Staff	88
7	Inadequate Support Staff	86
8	Lack of Student Motivation	92
9	Inconsistent student Attendance	88
10	Faulty Administration	42
11	Lack of ICT	76
12	Limited community Partnership	88
13	Lack of Follow up Activities	22

Interpretation:

The table outlines several significant challenges that elementary teachers face in implementing experiential learning, with **time constraints (100%)** emerging as the most universal problem. This suggests that teachers often struggle to balance hands-on activities with the demands of completing the prescribed syllabus within limited instructional hours. **An unfavorable pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) affects 94%** of teachers, indicating overcrowded classrooms where individual attention becomes difficult, especially in activity-based learning settings. **Lack of student motivation (92%)** also presents a major hurdle, showing that without intrinsic interest, students may not fully engage with experiential tasks. Similarly, **inconsistent student attendance (88%)**, **less staff availability (88%)**, **inadequate support staff (86%)**, and **limited community partnership (88%)** highlight both human resource shortages and a lack of external collaboration—factors critical for the successful execution of projects, fieldwork, and group-based activities.

Lack of ICT (76%) suggests that many schools are still not equipped with the necessary technological infrastructure to support digital experiential learning methods, such as simulations or virtual labs. The **rigidity**

of the curriculum (48%) and **limited resources (42%)** further constrain teachers, restricting their ability to adapt or innovate. **Faulty administration (42%)** appears to hinder systemic support for experiential teaching models, while **less training opportunities (34%)** leave educators unequipped to adopt new methodologies confidently. Notably, only **22% report a lack of follow-up activities**, which may imply that when experiential learning is conducted, reflection and consolidation efforts are generally included.

Overall, the data highlights a mix of structural, logistical, and motivational issues. It clearly shows that while the value of experiential learning is recognized, systemic barriers such as time pressure, lack of staff, poor infrastructure, and insufficient training must be addressed to fully realize its potential in elementary education.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study have significant educational implications for enhancing teaching practices and learning outcomes at the middle stage level.

- By identifying effective pedagogies that support experiential learning, the study highlights the need for a shift from traditional, teacher-centered methods to more student-centered, activity-based approaches.
- Implementing experiential learning can foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving skills among young learners. The study also emphasizes the importance of curriculum flexibility, adequate teacher training, and resource availability to support these practices.
- Furthermore, it suggests that policymakers and school administrators should invest in professional development programs, provide necessary infrastructural support, and encourage community involvement to create a more engaging and inclusive learning environment.

Ultimately, adopting experiential pedagogies can make learning more meaningful, enjoyable, and impactful for middle stage students, laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

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