

Experiential Learning Practices in ECE: Perceptions and Practices

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Abstract

Background: *Experiential learning is useful for helping people discover and make changes to their abilities, attitudes, and behaviours that will improve their productivity. The goal of the study is to determine the efficacy of curriculum implementation through experiential learning, along with the associated evaluation tools, in regard to consistency among playschools and schools, as well as to classify divergence points to develop novel approaches.*

Methodology: *A mixed-method research approach has been adopted, comprising survey and focused group interviews. The reflection journal, curricular document research, and case studies were the key instruments used to investigate the hypotheses. The points of consistency and divergence between the two levels of education*

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*on were explored
using these
methodologies.*

Results: *According
to the results of
questionnaires and
interviews, the
majority of
respondents felt that
establishing
connections between
playschools, primary
schools, and parents
could make the shift
to school smoother.
95% of those
surveyed say they
can*

notice the total differences between children who attended playschool and those who did not receive early training till the second grade. According to the majority of survey respondents (87%), irrespective of the method of implementation and school curriculum, ranging across the most outdated to the most progressive, early education is the driving notion of awareness that learning at an earlier age is the cornerstone of personal growth.

Conclusion: *In conclusion, learning at an earlier age is the cornerstone of personal growth, whereas experiential learning is the basis for constructing a career. This is supported by the curriculum consistency analysis between these two vital levels explored in the current work as well as the educational curricula.*

Keywords: *Early childhood education, experiential learning, growth mindset development, learning practices, pre-school, skills development*

Introduction

Early childhood education's major goal is to promote pupils' efficient development and growth. It lays the groundwork for learning in the students' minds so that they can effectively develop their talents and abilities from a young age. Childhood care and education also offer information and knowledge to the kids' families and communities in an effort to support their healthy growth and development. Play is the first step in learning in pre-school. Students are taught sketching and colouring techniques at the next level after they start to like playing, which helps them grow interested in the arts. Academic ideas, such as the alphabet, numbers, and so forth, are taught to students at the next level.

Education is a vast subject. It covers information, capabilities, attitude, routines, communication, mental faculties, discernment, morality, and honesty. These elements are crucial for helping pupils establish a growth mentality, which in turn helps them advance. For formal entry into the educational system, students must be well-prepared. It is essential for pupils to have a solid grasp of academic topics before applying for ad

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ssion to school settings. This will allow them to adapt to the teachers' teaching-learning strategies and improve their performance. The facilitation of learning and education is effectively aided by early childhood education.

Education is a broad subject. It includes skills, knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, communication, cognitive capacities, wisdom, intelligence, justice, and honesty, among other things (Latifah, 2021). These factors are critical for the development of students' thoughts, as well as their growth. Students must be properly prepared before entering the regular school system. In order to be admitted to school settings, Children must fully understand academic concepts in order to adapt to the teaching-learning strategies utilised by their teachers and increase their efficacy. Early childhood education contributes greatly to learning and education improvement (Slot, 2018).

Students are empowered to take charge of their own education through experiential learning approaches, which allow for immersive, hands-on activities that encourage critical thinking and self-directed study. Experiential learning permits students to build their own knowledge by actively participating in real-world activities and tasks, as opposed to the passive receiving of information commonly seen in traditional teaching approaches. Learners gain independence when they participate in experiential learning activities; they are responsible for their own education, create their own objectives, choose their own actions, and evaluate their own performance (Zaidi, Khan & Oad, 2020). Students improve their knowledge, competence, and self-assurance via the process of applying what they've learned and reflecting on their experiences. Students who participate in experiential learning programmes are more likely to take charge of their own education, grow as individuals, and persevere in the face of adversity.

Early childhood is defined as the period from birth to eight. One of the primary motivations that early childhood is considered till the age of eight is

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ow the child to gain a thorough awareness of the complete educational process from playgroup to pre-primary and from pre-primary to primary. Early childhood education is in an ordered form. Teachers and other Pre-school staff members participating in this education must be precise and rigorous in their work and behaviour. It necessitates efficiency in terms of both structure and application. Teachers must consider care and attention when conveying learning, comprehension, or information to their students (Cappelen et al., 2020). Because pre-school students are young, they require special attention in areas such as learning, playing, health, emotions, diet, nutrition, and psychology. These are crucial for a child's entire growth. The primary goal of early childhood education is to promote students' effective development and progression. It provides the basis for students to learn to build their skills and expertise effectively from a young age. Early childhood education also provides information and knowledge to the students' families and communities to assist in their optimal growth and progress.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) and its Importance

The importance of ECE is widely acknowledged. This is understood by all community members, regardless of their origins or jobs. The first three years of a person's life are critical. The child develops the connections that will lead to growth at this age. Whether parents are educated or not, they must effectively understand how to execute developmental activities and appreciate the importance of education. They will be capable of providing a useful approach if they are familiar with different child development practices (Jampaklay et al., 2018; Murray, 2018; Wu & Zhang, 2017). Parents are the ones who are most dedicated to and committed to their children's functional development and growth. Children remain close to their mothers until they are three years old and rely on them for all activities and functions (Shaughnessy & Kleyn, 2012). When children reach the age of four, they realise that there is a world outside their house with

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high they must become familiar. ECE aids students in the development of their mental capacities as well as their skills and talents. As a person grows older, his social needs become more complex. ECE is crucial since it provides knowledge and information for the individual's complete development. Many philosophers, researchers, educators, and economists have contributed to the development of this field (Kahila et al., 2020). Individuals and groups with a strong interest and excitement in this field have sought to advance it. Economic progress and efficiency issues have been a cause of worry, and ECE is a direct source of concern because it contributes significantly to the development of future citizens (Calman & Tarr-Whelan, 2005; Sharma & Aswal, 2021).

One of the key purposes of ECE is the child's development, which is divided into three sections. Cognitive abilities, school preparation, and social and emotional development are among them. When considering cognitive abilities, it is critical to pay attention to general intelligence. Because they are concerned with developing intellectual and cognitive capacities, individuals must strive to develop their problem-solving, decision-making, and logical-reasoning abilities (Rubab, Mustafa & Nawaz, 2020).

Individuals with different behavioural tendencies develop social and emotional abilities at varying rates. Examples are introverts, extroverts, self-centred, isolated, reluctant, etc. Students need to be taught how to handle their emotions better. Some behavioural features are found to be good, while others are thought to be bad. When students are young, they may exhibit some behavioural qualities that are not accepted in society, school, or home, such as yelling or sobbing; as a result, they should be taught how to stay calm and peaceful even in stressful situations.

Reading, writing, mathematics, communication, thinking, rational thought, problem-solving, decision-making, rational thought, job task planning, and designing are all areas where students can enhance their

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emic learning. Students are educated in these areas from the beginnings so that as they grow older, they can refine their skills. When students are young, they are typically helped by their parents or instructors when making decisions or struggling with topics. However, as they enrol in higher education institutions, they must make their own decisions; as a result, academic learning begins at the ECE stage.

According to Oad, Khan and Khoso (2020), students' English language anxiety must be addressed through experiential learning. Putting pupils in real-life situations where they can use language skills helps reduce anxiety and improve proficiency. Fear of poor assessment and low self-esteem strongly affect linguistic anxiety.

Conceptual sources on Experiential Learning in Early Childhood Education and Growth Mindset Development

Dr Carol Dweck established the growth mindset learning theory (Dweck, 2013). It is based on the premise that intelligence, capability, and productivity can all be improved. This indicates that by assisting students in establishing a growth mindset, we may assist them in becoming more successful and efficient learners.

Experiential learning is useful for helping people discover and make changes to their abilities, attitudes, and behaviours that will improve their productivity. Figure 1 demonstrates the basis for experiential learning.



Figure 1. Kolb's cycle of experiential learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

Definition of Experiential Learning

The term experiential learning can be indicated by the idea of learning through performing/doing. For instance, everyone has learnt to walk and speak without being taught or given instructions; instead, we all practised and improved our skills. As a result, educators and facilitators can use this technique with people from different areas of life in various scenarios (Morris, 2020). Age, education, expertise, skills, background, or culture are not impediments. In the area of talent development, experiential learning is best described as:

"Students develop greater awareness, knowledge, capabilities, and attitudes by analysing and reflecting on activities (Rezaei & Beyerlein, 2018)."

According to this definition, activity can range from a single person conveying a concept/notion or accomplishing straightforward tasks to participating in competitive and challenging collaborative activities, including multiple psychological and intellectual qualities and behavioural conducts.

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description enlightens two central points:

Experiential learning is an interactive approach in which the learner participates rather than a passive one in which the learner is subjected to.

In experiential learning, the experience serves as a foundation for learning, while rigorous analysis and evaluation of the experience help to progress the learning.

Individuals are promoted to figure things out for themselves, and instead of being instructed, they are directed to and through their learning. Individuals produce learning that is suited for them. This concept assumes that how a person thinks, follows the defined norms, or trails specific or perfect behavioural patterns is not restricted to a certain way or says "the correct way" that everyone is obliged to must learn and use. The learner's determination to make the most of their education is all that matters as they are at the centre of the learning process; it is their education.

Experiential learning takes place in a real learning environment; in its most basic form, it refers to learning via experience or through practice (Ayers & Laursen, 2021). Students in experiential education are immersed in an experience before being encouraged to reflect on it to build new thinking patterns, attitudes, and abilities. Experiential learning can also be defined as the development of narrow interpretations, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes via activity analysis and evaluation.

However, owing to the changing dimensions of the world, a lot of new questions also arise. How do we prepare our children for the future now that the world has changed and the children have changed? What are the most considerable and essential capabilities, capacities, competencies, and characteristics that must be cultivated to teach successful adults?

According to Stanford University Specialist and Psychologist Carol Dweck:

"Everyone is a work in progress, so we began this research with the theme Strategies for optimising the consistency between playschool

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d school, which is a timely topic" (Yeager & Dweck, 2020).

Research Problem

Pre-school teachers are seen to have excellent capabilities and skills to apply and analyse the curriculum for consistency across different schooling levels, hence reducing the likelihood of discontinuities through experiential learning. The evaluating strategy, it is anticipated, will produce the school performance of the kids if the teachers' assessment competencies are developed. The experiment's didactic tasks are intended to be approached in a derivation report from the standpoint of comparing the individual hypothesis to the general:

Efficient curriculum approaches from the standpoint of maintaining consistency between the two schooling levels through experiential learning;

Alternately utilising the game can impact first-grade management productivity and the development of growth mindsets.

Research Aim

The goal of the study is to determine the efficacy of implementing the curriculum through experiential learning, along with the associated evaluation tools, with regard to consistency between schools and playschools, as well as to classify divergence points to develop novel approaches.

1. The prime incentive of the current study is emphasizing the perspectives of teachers on the function and efficacy of the curriculum used with the group in terms of experiential learning, growth mindset development, and rewards to highlight student achievement.
2. Identifying pre-school competency analysis methods as a predictor of eventual school integration is a second goal.
3. A third goal is to identify reasons for divergence and suggest practical strategies for ensuring/optimizing consistency between the two levels of

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ucation.

Research Questions

The following questions were prepared following the empirical problem statement and the study's objective:

1. What are the benefits of experiential learning in early childhood education?
2. What do the terms continuous learning and transitions signify in the context of experiential learning?
3. How does a child's growth mentality change from pre-school to primary school?

Methodology

The data collection methodology incorporates both qualitative and quantitative approaches. These techniques are designed to examine the outlooks of teachers of playschool and primary school regarding the consistency and divergence between the two educational levels. For testing the hypothesis, the data analysis was done via a survey questionnaire, focus groups, reflection journals, case studies, and curricular document research. The points of consistency and divergence between the two levels of education were explored using these methodologies.

Quantitative Methods

The questionnaire is formatted in a consistent manner. Three questionnaires were generated: one for primary school teachers, another for parents, and a third for pre-school teachers. Alongside the qualitative approach, a survey method comprising a questionnaire is among the significant research approaches to conduct mixed method research by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative elements.

The questionnaire will be designed for primary school teachers to determine their level of awareness, the importance and utility of developing

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aluative competencies, and their formative valences, in order to acquire the teachers' agreement with the developed framework, and their perspectives, strategies for making the assessment activity more convenient, its connection with the curricula, and the school's continuity. The attitudes and viewpoints of parents about child evaluation and the presence of playschool-school consistency are operationalised in a questionnaire.

We collected responses to the situation, phenomenon, and behaviours researched connected to the occurrence or dearth of consistency among the large groups' curricula and the higher education service curricula using questionnaires.

Qualitative Methods

The focus group is the most popular type of qualitative research. There are also intersections of the interviews centred on the group interviews, often known as in-depth group interviews. As per Morgan (2002), focus group interviews are a type of data collection strategy that involves group members interacting on an issue that the researcher has specified.

In the current scenario, a focus group of eight educators was formed with the theme of consistency and divergence in the curricula of a big group/preparatory class, with the goal of learning the most optimal practices in the field. The discussions in the focus group interviews would be on enhancing pedagogical research methods and practice in evaluating the skills and abilities of a child via tackling the synergies of alternate approaches of the conventional methodologies, as well as classifying the educational needs in curriculum implementation and divergence/continuity with the assumed group. Another reflection journal technique intends to explore the perceptions of primary-level school teachers concerning the value and requirement of enhancing the skills of teaching faculties via assessments and frequent evaluations as it relates to students' school outcomes.

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Qualitative Research Results

For the qualitative part of the research, focus group discussions were arranged with pre-school instructors with a degree or certificate in teaching as well as working experience of 30 to 40 years. The main topic discussed was consistency and divergence between the curriculum of a large group and preliminary classes. A few of the main elements discussed were playschool school's consistency and the pre-school's significant improvement to the next stage of learning, thereby blocking school drop-out rates and, evidently, on the long trench at school drop-out. The primary purpose of this discussion was making a set of statistics to enhance curricular implementation through experiential learning and growth mindset development.

Quantitative Research Results

Respondents replied positively to the question of whether the current big group curricula prepare students for the school's future by marking 52% and 34%, to a significant degree the item stated. One of the most important aspects impacting the implementation of the curricula and the transition to the next education stage is the teacher's knowledge of the pre-school's unique capacity. Concerning the significance of competencies as a central point in evaluating and analysing the children, as well as in the formulation of pre-school and school curricula, a vast majority (87%) believe it has a clear, exact image of the nature of competency in the educational procedure through experiential learning. Additionally, a total of 60% of the participants believed that the explanation or portrayal of future school competencies in which the teacher engages is the consequence of playschool and school collaboration.

Inquire about how the curriculum is used in a specified way:

8% believe that it has an impact on the assessment of playschool

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teachers' technical ability;

48% believe that incorporating experiential learning into the curriculum helps students learn better (formative feedback);

40% of participants believe that implementing the curricula results in the school receiving certification for pre-school education;

8% believe it has an impact on teachers' professional activities;

Also, 8% of respondents further agreed that the teaching staff's decision-making autonomy allows them to maximise their creative and aptitude potential in planning and executing programs, resulting in an understanding of preliminary university education within hierarchies.

Presenting the aims of the subjects that the children are taught at the start of the educational activities is crucial in capturing enthusiasm and learning goal orientation. This method is used by 87% of respondents, compared to 13% who do not. The study found that when dealing with children, teachers are usually always concerned with maximising the knowledge obtained by the children, presenting the objectives at the commencement of the didactic activities, and paying emphasis to the transmission of this information in the contemporary process of learning. When the instructional framework encourages information transmission, it typically takes place across similar knowledge domains or by continually referring to children's lives and learning experiences (Alvi & Gillies, 2021).

As per the poll participants (96%), self-assessment and/or peer evaluation (inter-evaluation) are considered optimal practices. The behaviour of learners must be apparent and quantifiable to assess their knowledge, abilities, or competencies.

Specific proof of the educational evaluation of a child for school (i.e., single probe on experiential areas, behavioural observation sheets, standard sheets, psychological assessments, and so forth) must be noted in the development sheet to verify children's education for the school (Harfitt & Chow, 2018).

The reflection card usage in the evaluation job was overwhelmingly

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sitive, with only 12% of respondents disagreeing. Teachers believe that we can speak of harmonising the curriculum framework with the one in the first two primary classes in a significant proportion (more than 60%), implying that it is perceived in the educational policies as well as in the central procurement processes.

Nevertheless, a large sum of teachers (more than 38%) believed that the first curriculum's two levels have a few variances. The following discontinuities were listed in order of frequency of teacher reasoning:

3.2% of teachers believe that schools do not pay attention to the game in terms of pedagogical methods;

1.1% think that the pace of growth in elementary school is unsuitable for children's specific characteristics;

the rational and logical games are absent in the 0.8% preliminary class;

A small minority of people (2%) think that the two programmes' shared content can be discussed without specifying what exactly is shared.

Conclusion

The current research explores the evaluation of playschool to primary school by using the teachers' opinions. The importance of participants' transition actions and their reliability is emphasised. These school-based shift events will influence future studies towards establishing successful transition programs in the community. Many teachers believed that the playschool's entire activity is designed to ease the transition to primary school by emphasising a basic understanding of many curriculum areas and acclimating to the school atmosphere. According to the results of the survey and focus group interviews, the majority of the participants felt that establishing connections between playschools, primary schools, and parents has the potential to make the shift to school smoother. In actuality, the primary and playschool instructors/teachers have demonstrated a lack of understanding of teaching methods and curricula. Over 80% of instructors believed that the early life period and the playschool era are

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ferred to as the age of grace, wonderful years, the golden age, or the years when parents have the most opportunity to raise and develop their kids. This is the moment of the foundation of children's thoughts, emotions, and attitudes upon which the upcoming life and the rest of the vivid events are preserved. 95% of those surveyed say they can notice the total differences between children who attended playschool and those who did not receive early training till second grade. From the period of a preparatory group till the second grade, the developments and transformation of a child are in its core stage. One of the most important aspects of intellectual growth is enjoying taking on tasks, missions, and challenges. The majority of the respondents (87%) in the current research asserted that irrespective of the school curricula and the method of implementation, ranging across the most conventional to the most progressive, and irrespective of how learning is framed, the starting six years of a child's education and development must not be overlooked. As a result, a curriculum tailored as per the necessities of the child-centred but school-based future is a must, and consistency between playschool and school is a guarantee of future accomplishments.

All of these claims and evidence support the working hypothesis that if pre-schoolers' education is organised around competence training, they will no more be stressed by integrating timely evidence but will instead be introduced into the frameworks, ideas, themes, and concepts that help to organise a discipline, a knowledge spectrum, and improve competencies and proficiencies encompassing broader uses of the format.

Finally, we must remember that learning is comprehensive, and the novel cognitive structures necessitate innovative perspective and approach to education. One of the key aims of the pre-school education system is to prepare the pre-school for the preparation class. Pre-school education is the key to the school ecosystem and effectively designing the pre-school for the preliminary/preparatory classes. From the perspective of consistency

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divergence between pre-school and primary school education, this study has discovered different perspectives regarding the relevance of experiential learning, and it begins by addressing the subsequent:

Early education is the driving concept of awareness that early life education is the basis and cornerstone of personal growth, and experiential learning is the building block of future accomplishments.

Education is a constant cycle that is defined by active engagement with adults;

Valid concepts and values are respected in early education: each kid is unique, with distinct and special requirements;

The new pre-school curricula are founded on the notion of early education and are part of the educational framework of child-centred, experiential learning-based curricula.

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