

FOSTERING INTEREST AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING APPROACH

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Abstract:

Experiential Learning has profoundly been a valuable learning method since ages, it creates an engaging learning through a variety of opportunities. Learning is no more restricted to four walls of the schools or classrooms, but extends horizons of experience and interactive learning.

Experiential learning broaden the learning space and strengthen the learning experiences. There are many ways of providing experiential learning, the present study focuses on field trip as a method in providing experiential learning. Field trips are great examples of experiential learning. They provide an opportunity for students to explore the surrounding by reinforcing the learning done in the classroom. The present study focus on field trip as a method of experiential learning to foster interest and communication skills among students.

Keywords: *Fostering, Interest, Communication Skills, Experiential Learning*

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Introduction:

Experiential Learning has profoundly been a valuable learning method since ages, it creates an engaging learning through a variety of opportunities. Learning is no more restricted to four walls of the schools or classrooms, but extends horizons of experience and interactive learning. Experiential Learning focuses on deep learning rather than surface learning. Surface learning generally focuses on exams and intends rote memorization whereas deep learning involves in providing valuable experience through hands on learning, active learning and integrative learning.

Experiential Learning aims to provide an environment of:

Experiences: Drawing meaningful experience and build strong relation with others.

Imagining: Focus on imaginative thinking, thereby following the maxim of concrete to abstract and whole to part. Reflective practices are enhanced through experiences

Reflecting: The impact of learning is drawn in reality when the experiences are mapped to life and society.

Analysing: Experience helps in analysing the facts and also the sequence of events. The order helps in understanding the importance of each element of learning thus interlinking the experience to meaningful learning.

Deciding: Experiential learning provides opportunities to think, frame logical understanding, make judgement formulate conclusions.

Experiential learning broaden the learning space and strengthen the learning experiences. There are many ways

of providing experiential learning, the present study focuses on field trip as a method in providing experiential learning.

Field trips are great examples of experiential learning. They provide an opportunity for students to explore the surrounding by reinforcing the learning done in the classroom. Classroom teaching not associated with active learning opportunities will develop boredom and monotony thus lowering deeper level of understanding and superficial learning. It will slowly make students disinterested and building strong connections of real life learning will be hampered.

The present study focus on field trip as a method of experiential learning to foster interest and communication skills among students.

Objectives of the study:

To study the interest among students towards field trip as a method of experiential learning

To study fostering of communication skills among students towards field trip as a method of experiential learning

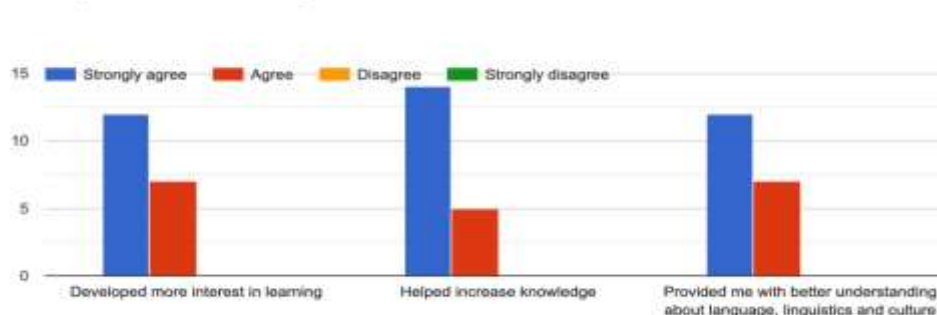
Research Question:

1. To what extent does field trip foster interest among students towards experiential learning?
2. To what extent does field trip foster communication skills among students towards experiential learning?

Sample for the study: 90 Student teachers of a B.Ed College located in Urban Mumbai were selected as the sample for the study. The field trip linked to the study was visit to Chhatrapati Vaastu Sanghralaya, Mumbai.

To what extent does field trip foster interest among students towards experiential learning?

Field trip and interest in learning



Findings:

85% of students strongly agree that Field trip developed interest whereas 15% of students agree the same.

95% of students strongly agree that Field trip helped increase of knowledge whereas 5% students agree the same.

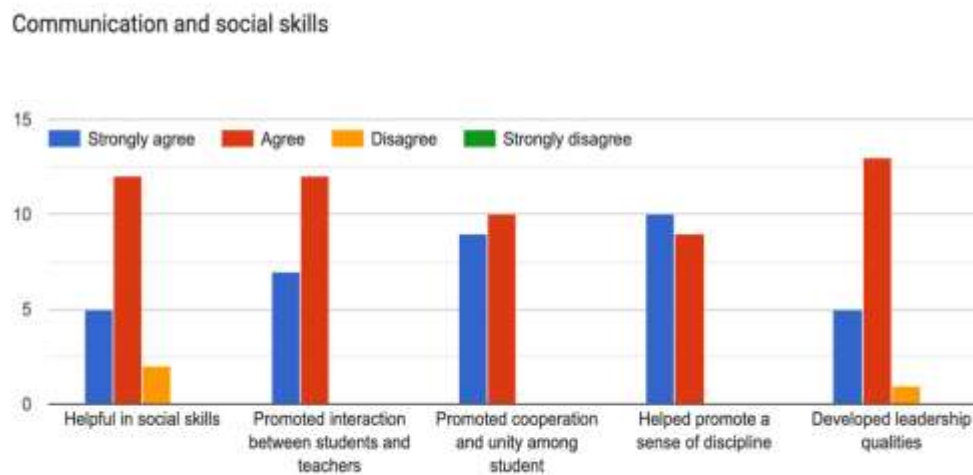
85% of students strongly agree that Field trip provided them with better understanding of language, linguistic and culture whereas 15% of students agree the same.

Discussion:

The above findings highlight the importance of Field trip in fostering interest among students towards experiential learning, it provides a learning life experience thus fostering their imagination and direct learning. The students are able to connect with classroom learning and build and develop a feeling of responsibility in

learning process. It also inspires them to probe further thus expand the learning horizon vertically and horizontally. It helps in understanding related concepts associated in learning thus forming strong conceptual understanding that is useful for solving real life problems. Field trip enhanced their critical thinking skills and gave students a chance to think about a topic or theme from a different perspective

To study fostering of communication skills among students towards field trip as a method of experiential learning



Findings:

12% of students strongly agree that Field trip was helpful in social skills whereas 80% of students agree the same and 08 % students disagreed the social aspect of field trip in experiential learning.

10% of students strongly agree that Field trip promoted interaction between students and teachers whereas 90% of students agree the same.

49% of students strongly agree that Field trip promoted cooperation and unity among students whereas 51% of students agree the same.

51% of students strongly agree that Field trip promoted a sense of discipline whereas 49% of students agree the same.

12% of students strongly agree that Field trip developed leadership skills whereas 85% of students agree the same and 03 % students disagreed the leadership aspect of field trip in experiential learning.

Discussion:

The above findings highlight the importance of Field trip in fostering communication skills among students towards experiential learning. Field trip involves a lot of coordinated efforts such as planning, executing the field trip, onsite notes – filed notes, onsite discussions and clarifications, coordinating with teachers and peers. This requires effective and cordial interpersonal skills and hence communication skills needs to be enhanced. The field trip gave an opportunity to students to hone their skills. Being an active participant in the field trip helped students towards cohesiveness and group compatibility. Being a team player is the need of the hour to extend a

positive social learning environment.

Conclusion:

Education and learning processes cannot be limited to the classroom or school environment. The real-world connection and hands-on experience have proved their significance over the years among the learning community for better learning. Bookish knowledge provides information available in the books that are delivered through lecture method usually. To build real life connection to the lecture method an out of class activity draws prime needs and importance. Field trips act as a significant help in this area thus embracing learning spaces with the natural surroundings, in the company of teachers and peers. Few notable advantages that Field trips offers are out-of class activity and flexible timetable schedule thus breaking the monotony of the classroom. Communication and interaction skills of the students are enhanced thus helping them to discover their potential and explore new things.

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