

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

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Experiential Education:

The main element of experiential education is the student and it makes the education process meaningful.

“Tell me and I forget, Teach me and I remember, Involve me and I Learn.”

- Benjamin Franklin, 1750

“I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.”

- Confucius

Educationalists and Psychologists have given various teaching methods for education, in which importance has been given to education through activity, education through value and experiential education. Child psychologists like Mahatma Gandhiji, Gijubhai Badheka, Tarabehen, Jugatram Dave have also given priority to learning through experience.

A child can remember very easily if the child is taught through experience. As he gets direct experience, he never forgets that action, learning and also develops his creativity. Mahatma Gandhi believed in teaching children through experiments.

Although Gandhiji was a realist and naturalist, he was also an idealist. According to Gandhiji, education is not just book knowledge but it should go beyond cramming and get knowledge based on experience and through education children should develop allround.

Gandhiji’s concept of Education –

“To bring out the best in the child’s body, mind and soul and develop it.”

- Gandhiji

Children must be provided with adequate learning experiences to bring out such excellent qualities in children.

Children can be given real education through direct and personal experiences. Experiments in education and experiential learning methods and experiential knowledge gained from experiments are like ‘Gangotri’ for our new National Education Policy-2020.

Experiential Education and National Education Policy-2020 have also given importance to experiential education.

- **Experiential Education has two bases:**
 1. The teaching of experience through senses
 2. The teaching of experience through performance

1. The teaching of experience through senses:

Children are taught by making them experience through the senses in the process of education. E.g. Acquiring knowledge through different types of demonstration, smell, hearing, taste and touch experiences through eye, nose, ear, tongue and skin.

For example:

1. To teach children that there is life in plants in the subject of science, to teach children through direct experience by conducting experiments on plants.
2. To make the children gain experience by experimenting that heating the object changes its size and shape.
3. Also for any language learning the use of that language is very important. So creating a situation for children to acquire language skills so that they can use the language and gain language use experiences.

2. The teaching of experience through performance:

Karmendiya means hands and feet experience education in hand and foot education means to acquire experiences to acquire skills in handicraft industries. Primary education handicraft industries like embroidery, sewing, knitting, weaving etc. are imparted through experience so children can acquire skills in handicrafts as well. Use these skills in your life to become self-reliant.

Mahatma Gandhi also advocated education in the 3-H for hands-on experience, direct learning. The 3-H stands for Head, Hand and Heart.

Head, hand and heart – these three can be taught in various ways in education by providing children with direct experiences.

Steps in the process of Experiential Education:

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully selected experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis.
- Experiences are designed to require the student to take initiative, make decisions, and be responsible for results.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the student is actively engaged in asking questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, accepting responsibility, being creative and constructing meaning.

- Students are intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually and / or physically connected. This involvement creates a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- Learning outcomes are individualized and form the basis of future experience and learning. Relationships are developed and nurtured. Student to self, student to others and student to the world.

Students will experience or perform a hands-on experience with little or no assistance from the instructor. Examples may include: making products or models, role-playing, giving presentations, solving problems, playing games. A key aspect of experiential learning is what the student learns from the experience rather than the quantity or quality of the experience.

In experiential learning, the instructor guides rather than directs the learning process where students are naturally interested in learning.

The new National Education Policy-2020 emphasizes on developing the necessary life skills and abilities in children and holistic development of children.

- Teaching through activity and experience to reinforce conceptual understanding rather than rote learning.
- Providing opportunities for creative and logical thinking by emphasizing the senses to encourage logical decision making and new ideas.

Gijubhai always said –

“Keep the child away from punishment, competition and temptation. The joy in the activity is its reward. Competition in pleasure is harmful.”

The Modern Educational Policy-2020 has included ideas on experiential learning of crafts. The curriculum includes both hands-on, real-world knowledge through hands-on learning, hands-on experience, and reflection to gain specialized knowledge based on experiences. Experiential learning experiences help students prepare for their chosen career, does that reinforce course content and theory.

Students learn through student – instructor – centered experiences, exploring, reflecting, through these experiences students develop communication skills and confidence, and acquire and strengthen decision making skills by responding to and solving real world problems and processes.

The new National Education Policy-2020 also advocates experiential education.

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