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## Mobile Apps On Experiential Learning: A Quick Guide For Educator

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**Abstract:** Educator need to explore the effective methods of teaching to create enjoyable learning environment. This research is largely based on the experience of applying experiential learning in teaching a non-law subject to law students in Centre for Foundation Studies, University Teknologi MARA. Based on the research conducted, the feedback shows that 89% respondents prefer learning environment consisting of combination of conventional method and experiential learning. Besides, research found that based on the students perception, experiential learning is an effective instrument to enhance learners' understanding of the topics, exposing them to the real world and giving them opportunity to relate and apply the knowledge that they had gained in the classroom into a real life situation. Respondents also reported that they have acquired myriad of skills through the application of experiential learning such as teamwork, communication, technological, leadership, critical thinking and other soft skills. Thus, researchers took the initiative to design a mobile apps that serves as a quick guide for educators at all level of education to adopt experiential learning as part of their methods of teaching. The mobile apps contains explanation on experiential learning, is proven benefits to both learners and educators and examples of experiential learning activities that can assist the educators who wish to embark on this method.

**Keywords:** Experiential learning, effective teaching, conventional teaching method, mobile apps

### Introduction

The traditional teacher-centred atmosphere of the college classroom has been criticized for not fostering a student's ability to think in Garrett (2008). The conventional teaching and training are based mainly on knowledge or skills transfer, but does not address individual growth and potential particularly well as showed in Mollaei and Rahnama (2012). A learner-centred approach to teaching on the other hand fosters a deep approach to learning, where learners are required to think critically.

Studies show that the typical student's attention span is about 10 to 15 minutes, even though it is natural for students' attention to vary depending on the motivation and others factors as discussed in Wilson and Korn (2007). Therefore, the modern days educators need to find teaching methods and strategies that can hold and capture the students' attention especially the distracted ones.

The researchers specially design a mobile apps to assist and giving a guidance for educators to apply experiential learning in their teaching. An innovative model for experiential learning is presented based on learning outcomes and skill requirements intended in Malaysian curriculum.

The mobile apps consists of three major contents; (i) the definition of experiential learning, (ii) the guidelines on experiential learning, (iii) 8 examples of experiential learning and in each examples, a brief explanation on the activity, objective, suggested time and size, benefits and role of instructor were provided.



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Figure 1: The interface of the mobile apps

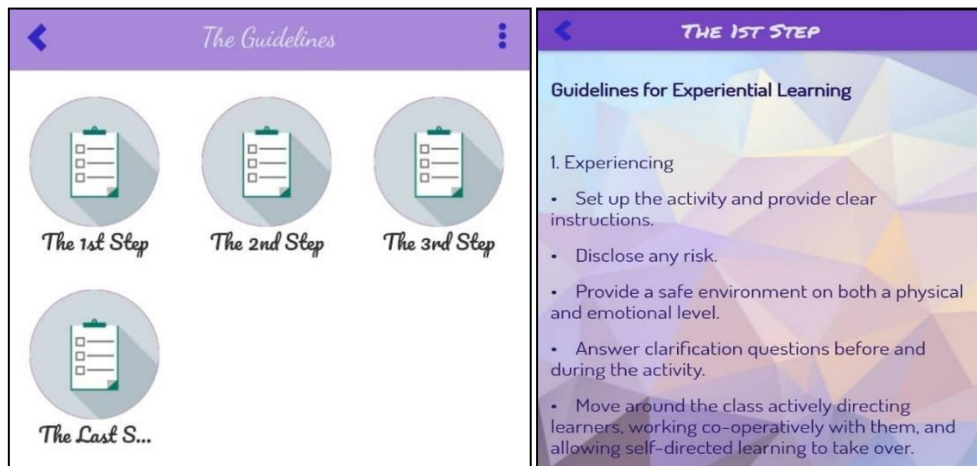


Figure 2 and 3: The guidelines on Experiential Learning

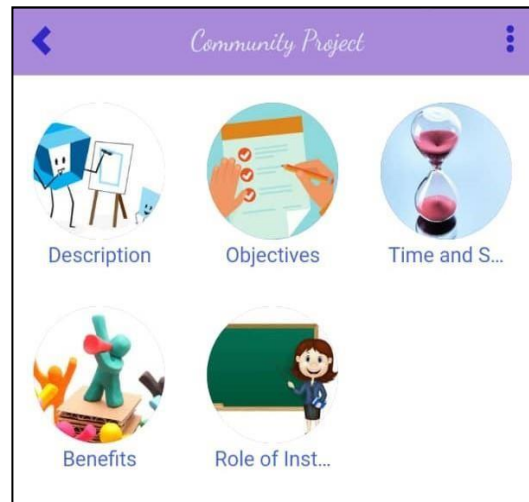


Figure 4: One of the examples of Experiential Learning; Community Project

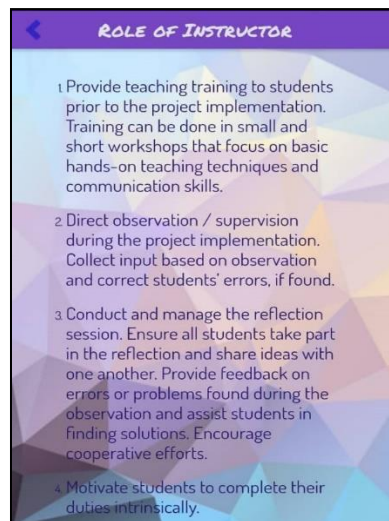


Figure 5: Role of Instructor for Community Project

### ***What is Experiential Learning?***

One of the most cited experientialists, David Kolb (1984), describes the experiential learning process as "a process whereby concepts are derived from and continually modified by experience". For Kolb (1984), in an effective learning process, a learner negotiates the dialectics between concrete experience and abstract conceptualization, and between observation and action. Concrete experience, or an interaction with the world, provides a learner with a reference point with textures, feelings, meanings, and emotional impulses.

### ***Guidelines for Experiential Learning***

The experiential learning cycle involves four phases such as a) experiencing, b) processing/reflect, c) generalising/thinking, and d) applying/acting.

### ***Example of Activities***

The central idea of this mobile apps is to give a guidance for educator to apply experiential learning in their teaching. There are 14 examples provided in the mobile apps largely based on the researchers' experience of applying experiential learning in teaching students in Centre for Foundation Studies,



Universiti Teknologi MARA. Among the examples are service learning role play/dramatization, film circle, student exchange programme, client counselling, simulation learning, educational escape room, mock trial and field trip.

Table 1: List of Example of Activities

Activities	Description
Service Learning	Service learning is the project-based practical application of knowledge and learning achieved by assigning students to work on community-based projects as discussed in Glenn (2002).
Role play / Dramatisation	Educational drama may be defined as ‘an improvisational, non-exhibitional, process centred form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences’ as explained in Pearce and Hardiman (2012).
Film Circle	Film circle is the concept whereby students learn a lot about what is inaccessible to them physically – abstract theories, cultures, beliefs, philosophy, geography of foreign countries - by watching movies.
Student Exchange Programme	Student exchange or outbound mobility programmes defined as activities and programs that encourage the flow of ideas and people across cultural and international boundaries as mentioned in Harari (1992).
Client Counselling	Client counselling is an act or a process to guide a client especially by a trained and professional person to solve his problems to which he is suffering from in different perspectives. Students will be given a set of scenarios in a form of problem-based question and it must be given a few days before the actual counselling session. Based on the problems given, students need to advise their client by providing possible solutions.
Simulation Learning	Simulation is a technique for practice and learning that can be applied to many different disciplines and types of trainees as showed in Lateef (2010). It provides students with an experience as close to the ‘real thing’ as possible.
Educational Escape Room	Escape rooms are like real-life video games, in which players have to search for clues and solve puzzles in order to solve a mystery and escape the room within the allotted time as discussed in Thoegersen and Thoegersen (2016).
Mock Trial	Mock trial is a competitive experiential learning activity in which participants plan and execute a simulated civil or criminal court case as explained in Kopko et al. (2017).
Field Trip	Field trips provide students with the opportunity to apply content learned in the classroom to contexts outside of the school environment that is likely to enhance their understanding and retention of knowledge discussed in Bransford et al. (2000).



## Result and Discussions

The mobile apps is downloadable by mobile phone users via a link shared by the researchers. However, it is still at a trial stage. As at 15 August 2018, 77 users have downloaded the mobile apps and to illicit the users' feedback on the apps, they were given a set of survey questionnaires consists of 6 items.

There are 4 dichotomous questions (yes or no), one Likert scale items (from 1 as strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) and one open-ended questions. The 6 items were divided into different parts.

Items in Part A are meant to collect information on respondents' knowledge about experiential learning. Part B examines about the content and features of the mobile apps in terms of information provided and also the aesthetic value. Finally, Part C consists of one open ended question asking the opinion of the respondents on the problems that they faced while using the apps and suggestions to improve the apps if the apps is to be opened to public in the future.

In the first part of the survey (Part A), the users were asked whether they have knowledge about experiential learning before using the apps. Based on the response, 20.8% n=16 answered 'No' (Figure 6). It can be summarized that not everyone have exposure to experiential learning before.

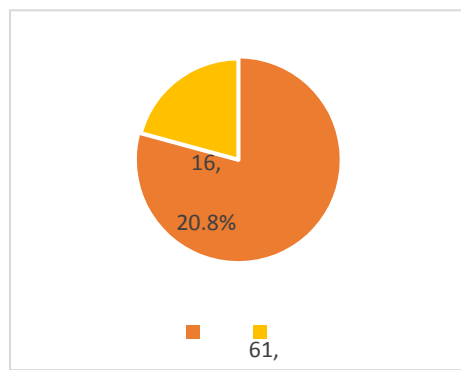


Figure 6: Knowledge on Experiential Learning

For the second question, the users were asked whether the mobile apps able to help them to understand what experiential learning is. Most of the respondents answered 'Yes' (97.4% n=75) with only 2.6% n=2 answered 'No'. This data reflects that the content provided in the apps helps the users to understand experiential learning.

In the second part of the survey (Part B), the users were asked about the content and features of the mobile apps. Based on the data collected, 97.4% n=75 respondents were of the opinion that the content is useful and beneficial to them. Whereas, 78% n=60 respondents agreed that the features of the mobile apps is interesting and attractive (Figure 7). Based on this data, it can be summarized that the content provided is sufficient but needs improvement on the visual feature.

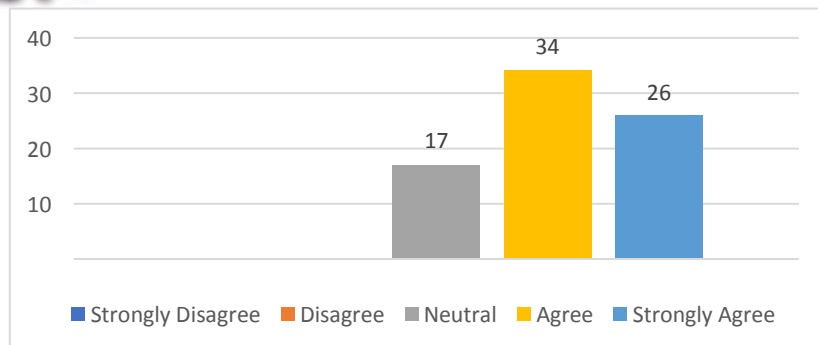


Figure 7: Likert scale item question - 'The feature of the apps is interesting and attractive'.

In another question, the users were asked on the willingness to download the mobile apps if it is opened to public. Most of the respondents answered 'Yes' with only 6.5% n=5 answered 'No'. This result manifests the users' intrinsic positive attitude towards experiential learning as a whole.

Lastly, the third part of the survey (Part C) is regarding suggestion and recommendation for the purpose of improvement of the mobile apps. Among the suggestions were; inclusion of video of activities, to open the mobile apps to public and to add more features for example forum and inquiry platform in the mobile apps. These suggestions are essential and would be considered by the researchers in improving the mobile apps in the future.

### Conclusion

Based on research conducted, 89% respondents prefer the combination of experiential learning and conventional method of teaching. The combination of these two methods based on the respondents' opinion is effective, interesting and exposed them to the reality instead of only theoretical part of certain knowledge. It also equipped them with various kinds of soft skill. Hence, the development of the apps is necessary to assist educators to employ experiential learning to add value to their teaching method. From the positive feedback received, the researchers believe that the apps is beneficial not just to educator but also to students. The glaring feature of experiential learning is making experience as a way of learning. Thus, it is recommended that this app to be used as a guide in facilitating educator to adopt experiential learning in teaching as an added value to conventional teaching approach.

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