BLOG 1 Draft 1

The Evolution of Experiential Learning

# Experiential learning – Lessons for a life time

“Change is inevitable, growth is optional.”

In an ever-changing world of today, the only thing that hasn’t changed much is the method of learning we all follow. The challenges of the modern world, may it be at work place or essential problems that occur in an individual’s day to day life requires an exceptional skill of problem solving. The public education system we currently follow has been around for more than 150 years, and as a result of which the learning method is highly saturated and inadequate at providing the learner with an exceptional skill of problem solving. The industries of today expects their employees to be fully equipped with the knowledge of their respective field of work.

The conventional teacher-centered learning method promotes the supremacy of the teacher in a class room atmosphere. Though this method may have its own advantages and delivered the job for more than a century, it is in dire need of an upgrade. The Experiential learning method on the other hand promotes the education of pupil through a mode of hands-on-learning. Learning through experience has proven to be a major breakthrough in the field of education enabling the learner to function efficiently.

# Experience – The Master teacher

Every single incident or an event faced since birth is classified and stored in different parts of the human brain. This process of accumulation of knowledge or skill that results from direct participation in the event can be defined as experience. Human Brain -the most sophisticated organ in the entire world has a unique way of functioning. Charles Robert Darwin - an English naturalist, geologist, and biologist, widely known for his contributions to evolutionary biology claims that the human brain as we know it today hasn’t been this way always and it started from a single cell. He also describes the incredible journey of the human brain as it formed from a single cell and started accumulating data from generations of experience while gradually evolving from one species to another. Learning from experiences and sharing all the knowledge with the tribe demanded a much complex and advanced organ that can process and store all these data. Eventually as evolution progressed, nature paved way for the development of the human brain.

Learning from the experience and sharing the knowledge gained from it has shown humanity its way onto the top of the hierarchy. Experiential learning led to the development of all the science and technology of today’s world.

# Birth of Education

Back in those days of our ancestors living a hunter-gatherer life, mankind has already attained the status being the most intelligent species on the planet that was capable of learning from experience and sharing the knowledge with other members of the tribe. With the development of various techniques to find food and shelter, our species ensured its survival, leading to the rise in population and the need to live in communities increased significantly. Community living literally meant living with increased standards. Our ancestors realized that the key to community living is educating the members of the community based on experience, eventually leading our ancestors to develop various means to live efficiently, enabling them to have a community life in harmony. Education back then was all about food and shelter and survival but it was a splendid start which eventually would turn the phase of humanity forever.

# Education- What it means today

The beginning of globalization required the education of the masses to support its advancements in full swing. The term globalization describes how the development of trade and technology has defied the national borders making the world an interconnected and interdependent place. It is believed by many modern scholars that globalization started with Christopher Columbus’s voyage to the new world in 1492. The wave of globalization reached its highest peak with the end of world war 2 giving birth to large scale industries of wide range which demanded a huge labour force.

The growing industrial revolution led to creation of an education system that can be used to educate almost anyone to be a part of the great globalization. This educational method is an instructor-centred traditional method of learning that includes aspects like crowded classrooms, instant information sharing, impersonal approach to students and impersonal assessments etc. This education system was widely accepted by the Western countries, thus making it an approved method of learning across the globe. From nursery schools to research universities, the current education method is being followed by almost all range of academia across the globe, leaving no space for a different approach in education.

# The Glitch in the system

Upgrades- A common factor connecting our life, our homes, our phones, our cars and similar elements. The world growing with an incredible speed requires individuals with exceptional skills to support the speed of its growth. In simple terms, the lack of skilled labours slows down the speed of the growth. Industries and organizations coming up with revolutionary ideas are being slowed down due to lack of skilled workforce and the system of education is to blame. The industry expects the labour force to be well trained to work on -the- go.

The education system we follow is almost the same as it was two centuries ago. Having failed at implementing new concepts and experiential learning methods, the modern education system is producing a vast majority of labors who lack the applied skills and needs to trained again in the industry atmosphere.

# The Experiential learning method

The needs of the industries are ever-changing depending on the aspect of the venture. The hierarchical workflow of the industry is designed in a way that the ones in the top of the hierarchy makes majority of the decisions and constructs a framework of the venture. Moving down the hierarchy, the major part of the execution is done by the labor force of the industry. The conventional learning method teaches an individual on a theoretical level without making sure if the individual can apply the theory on a practical problem to find a solution.

The Experiential learning method promotes educating an individual with practical hands -on learning methods making sure the individual can apply his skills on solving any major industrial problems.

# Resource Sharing – A strategy

The implementation of experiential learning methods requires a wide range of industrial resources to train individuals with the required hands on experience and it is almost impossible for the academia to have to all such resources like advanced machineries, cutting edge laboratories etc. So, there is a need for a strategy that promotes smooth sharing of the industrial resources with the academia and vice versa. Explenet acts as a platform where that promotes a smooth sharing of resources among the users, the academia and the industry. Acting as a bridge between the industry and the academia, Explenet has created for its user the access to advanced laboratories from different institutions and industrial workplaces so the learner can have a complete hand on learning experience and also benefitting the academia by putting to use their underutilized laboratories and thus generating a revenue from it. The academia also benefits from the unlimited access to industry and student resources.

# EXPLENET- The Experiential learning network

“Necessity is the mother of inventions”.

Aimed at bringing forth an excellent and skilled workforce, Explenet is the pioneer of experiential learning in India, which connects the academia with the industry by facilitating better utilization of resources and promoting quality education.