EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

IN

TEACHER EDUCATION

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the Degree of

Master of Education

B.A. LAW

Education Department

University of Canterbury

1993
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ABSTRACT

Educators using an Experiential approach to teaching and learning have over a long period of time been promoting the benefits of this style of teaching.

Research based on the practical experience of educators using this approach in the United States has indicated that;

- pupils/students tend to have a much more positive relationship with teachers and are more interested in what they’re learning; the learning environment is considered safe and is learner-centred;

- the teacher/facilitators role is much more complex and requires individuals to be able to move quickly between three different modes of operating, giving direction, working co-operatively, and promoting self direction in learners;

- experiential education is process oriented, is active and dynamic and is based on a set of working principles.

The author has been involved over the last 4 years in developing an experiential process for teacher education and this approach is the focus of this study. The authors professional studies tutor group were given a written survey while two co-tutors were interviewed to gather information on their experience with this approach to teacher education.

The results of these surveys and interviews are considered in the light of what characterises this experiential learning approach for teacher education and explores how this differs from mainstream teaching and learning.

Because the literature on competency based teacher education and experiential education is extremely limited the author has relied on anecdotal evidence and experiential practice and has sought the views of students and colleagues.

The study promotes the principles of experiential education and puts forward a case for the use of these practices as key tools for teaching. It also highlights some of the problems faced by beginning teachers wanting to use this approach when they start their teaching career. Experiential education does conflict with many of the traditional practices that currently exist in schools and tertiary institutions. This provides both challenges and obstacles for those who adopt this approach to teaching and learning.
Acknowledgments

My thanks to Alan Scott and John Freeman-Moir for their inspiration, guidance and useful ideas in the preparation of this thesis and also for their support over the last 2 years of my university studies.

This study has been a challenging and enlightening experience for me and I would also like to thank Bert McConnell (Co-tutor 1990 and 1993) in particular for his support and feedback over the last four years. Without his constructive criticism, constant questioning and proof reading I would not have been as reflective in my own approach to teacher education and in particular this thesis as I have been.

Thanks also to Merryn Dunmill (Co-tutor 1991-92), Ian Culpan, Robyn Baker, Antoinette Owen, Derek Mitchell, my professional studies group during 1993 and the secondary programme staff for allowing innovative approaches to teacher education to emerge.

Many thanks to Heather and the girls for the opportunity, and time to complete this study, without their support I would never have finished.
Introduction

"John Dewey (1938) called the notion of experiential education redundant. All learning he asserts, is rooted in experience and therefore, experiential. While experiential educators may find it easy to agree, the conceptual framework which Dewey promoted and the pedagogical techniques derived from it continue to remain marginal in a vast majority of public schools. Teachers, administrators and policymakers are striving to unify a fragmented curriculum, foster teaching methods which engage students as active participants in the learning process and respond to the needs of at-risk students. These efforts call for experiential educators to enter the national discourse on educational reform." Westheimer Kahne Gurstein (1992).

What constitutes an "educational" experience is a question all teachers at some point must ask themselves.

Dewey's suggestion that "experiential learning is redundant" is based on the premise that teachers in general base their teaching on learners' experiences and needs. The overall failure of teachers to do this is a problem. This has led to concerns about the failure of Education and is one of the factors that led the recent reforms. The new curriculum framework document is an attempt to meet these concerns:

"The school curriculum will be sufficiently flexible to respond to each student's learning needs, to new understandings of the different ways in which people learn, to changing social and economic conditions, to national needs, and to the requirements and expectations of local communities."
These statements indicate an intent to offer a programme that is for the most part learner centred.

However the author suspects that the reality is that education is primarily directed at meeting the needs of the wider community and the requirements of a particular qualification first and foremost rather than the needs of the learner.

The learner centred versus the teacher centred approach to teaching has been extensively documented with some interesting results. Research on teacher centred instruction in American schools indicates that 70% of what goes on in a classroom is teacher talk. Goodlad (1984). The learner becomes the passive receiver of facts and information relevant to prescribed content.

It has been suggested that this is the result of teachers, lecturers and instructors being compelled to follow prescribed and lengthy curriculum. Westheimer Kahne Gurstein (1992).

The conservative nature, organisation and structure of schools, universities and polytechnics may be one of the major obstacles in the delivery of learner centred programmes. "Experiential programmes remain distinct from both the standard curriculum and the normal school day, are rarely institutionalised and are more often linked to affective than cognitive development." Westheimer Kahne Gurstein (1992).

The need for change has been recognised by those involved in experiential education and a renewed lobby is underway to promulgate stronger links with mainstream education. It is necessary in the
context of this report to define Experiential Education both in terms of educational theory and practice.

**Adopting an Experiential Approach to teacher Education**

The general idea of experiential learning is not new and Dewey (1938) is testament to fact. However the concept of experiential learning over the last decade has become much more refined and requires individuals using this approach to commit themselves totally to a student-centred approach to learning.

While many education initiatives suggest a more student centred approach teachers are constantly hamstring by the conservative nature of Government education policy, Tertiary institutions, schools and a large number of tradition style teachers.

The processes of Western Capitalism that are based in traditional conservative values within Society are now becoming well and truly intrenched in Education. Education now serves the needs of the capitalists. Students generally have most of their education decided for them by so called 'experts'. The content, how they learn, the assessment, their timetables, are all decided for them. There is no reference in the educational debate about asking students what they see as their needs or even asking them to be part of any decision making process that involves how, what or where they learn. While choice is said to be a virtue of the Western Education system it is not always achievable and when it is, it's normally only present for some.

Experiential learning is all about involving individuals in there own learning. It is marginalised because of the difficulties of using this approach within the conservative nature of many institutions.
It is however gaining in popularity with 'at risk groups' and is certainly used as an approach to learning outside the four walls of the classroom.

There is also evidence in the literature of experiential education techniques and process being used successfully in some specialist university courses and the normally traditional school system by enthusiastic advocates of this methodology.

However one of the problems in encouraging experiential education is the lack of understanding and training available in this particular area of learning. This again is partly due to the conservative nature of many education institutions. Having successfully used experiential learning techniques with groups in the outdoors the author was keen to develop and trial experiential learning as a process for teacher training. This thesis is an attempt to outline the concepts and process that eventually made this programme essentially experiential. It is also an opportunity to present the views of those students who have undertaken this method of training on how they perceive this particular approach to learning about teaching.

Both the advantages and limitation of the approach will be discussed in light of the students and tutors recommendations in chapter 5 of this report.

**Experiential Education:**

There is a reluctance on behalf of some experiential educators to define experiential education in terms of theory. "Of all things that might be true about experiential education the one thing that is unassailably true is that you can't find out by defining it". Huie in McPhee (1992). "The definition is not the answer rather it is the asking of the question that
encourages learning". McPhee (1992). Any term is open to interpretation and experiential education is no exception.

A first step in defining or expressing what is experiential education is to look briefly at what it isn't. Chapman (1992), Proudman (1992), Heron (1989) et al, all acknowledge it is not simply 'learning by doing'.

In this context experiential education is portrayed as a "hands on experience, the reality is that it is the learning and teaching process that defines whether a learning experience is experiential not the activity". Proudman (1992).

Experiential theory is elaborated on by Burnard 1988 who describes three broad types of knowledge,

1. propositional knowledge which is contained in theories or models,
2. practical knowledge which developed through the acquisition of skills and is usually but not necessarily psychomotor in nature,
3. experiential knowledge which is gained through "direct and personal encounter with a subject, person or thing."

The experiential knowledge is based on the relationship that develops from the experience, it is personal and is 'affective' in nature influencing the feelings and emotions. This concept of knowledge is synonymous with Heron's (1989) concept of manifold learning. This concept is explored in more detail in chapter one of this report.

The difference between propositional knowledge and experiential knowledge is clearly stated by Burnard:
"Experiential knowledge is important personal knowledge. We build up a store of it as we grow up and modify it as our experience of life develops and changes. Interestingly, if we attempt to clarify it and to put it into words we turn it into propositional knowledge. Thus there can be no experiential knowledge in textbooks and it cannot be conveyed through lectures."

The basis of this philosophy is centred around the idea that experiential knowledge is process orientated and cannot immediately be reduced to written information. The vital ingredient is each individual's personal response to the experience which cannot always be conveyed in words. Burnard also acknowledges the importance of individuals 'reflecting upon past personal experience as a means of discovering solutions to present problems from past situations.'

This is also a key element of Kolb's (1984) description of experiential learning.

Kolb described learning as made up of two dimensions, prehension or grasping information and transforming or processing that information. The prehensile dimension ranges from concrete experience to abstract conceptualisation. The transforming dimension ranges from reflective observations to active experimentation. Kolb (1984) suggested that learning occurs as the individual moves through a cycle of concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. The cycle is then repeated at a more complex level. Kolb's learning cycle is explained in more detail in chapter 2.

In order to convince educators, administrators and policy-makers however, there is a need to explain "what is experiential education?"
The editor of The Journal or Experiential Education challenges experiential educators to respond to this very question for the Journal's August edition in 1992. Chapman (1992) explains "it is an approach which has students actively engaged in exploring questions they find relevant and meaningful, and has them trusting and feeling as well as thinking," and this can lead to a change in how individuals learn. This supports one of the suggestions from the Learning in Science programme (LISP) research conducted at Waikato University that indicated pupils should have the opportunity to explore the answers to their own questions to develop meaning and understanding, rather than regurgitate facts with little understanding of the concepts.

Proudman (1992) suggests that "experiential education is at an exciting crossroads between refining our craft as a unique teaching and learning process that is applicable in many learning environments and defining experiential education as simply a set of activities". The definition advanced by the Association of Experiential Education reads in part:

"[It] occurs when newly acquired skills are applied through direct and active personal experience in order to illuminate, reinforce and internalise cognitive learning ..."

This definition also supports the notion of learning through an experiential process rather than just participating in activities.

These statements form the basis of the definition put forward by the author of this report. The definition is in two parts. The first part places experiential learning in context for the individual students involved in this report. The second is a definition of the experiential group process that has also become a major aspect of the programme.
Experiential learning involves individuals in the process of learning, using a learner centred approach. It includes feedback, reflection and the application of newly developed strategies. This is achieved through direct and active personal experience in order to identity, develop and reinforce new skills.

This is based on the notion of a learner centred process that is active rather than passive in relation to individuals involvement. Proudman (1992) while not defining experiential education acknowledges that it "combines experience that is meaningful to the students with guided reflection and analysis." It is a challenging, active, student centred process that impels students towards opportunities for taking initiative, responsibility and decision making.

He espouses further that it allows individuals to connect the head with the body, heart, spirit and soul, which leads to the second part of this definition, which refers to the process of working in an experiential group. The definition is based on Heron's (1989) notion of involving the "whole person". The experiential group encourages learning through acknowledging the whole person "as a spiritual, thinking, feeling, choosing, energetically and physically embodied being." The security of each individual's emotional or physical safety within this experiential group is the task of the facilitator or tutor. The role of the facilitator/tutor is described in detail in chapter 2 of this report.

**Experiential Education and the Link to Teacher Education:**

The continual development and emphasis placed on the generic skills of teaching has become a key focus of the secondary teacher education at the Christchurch College of Education.
The integration of experiential education as a process for delivering the preservice professional studies programme, was initially made in 1990 by the author and co-tutor Bert McConnell. During 1991 and 1992 the author co-tutored with Meryn Dunmill and is presently working again with Bert McConnell. Both co-tutors have been interviewed as part of this report and their professional contributions are detailed in chapter 4.

There are within the programme, numerous theorists, visionaries and enthusiastic reformers who offer a variety of teaching styles, methodologies and theories all of which find support from some groups of learners.

As one of six institutions responsible for the preservice delivery of teacher training the Christchurch College of Education decided to develop a coherent programme that addressed not only the particular subject needs of each student, but the general skills required of all beginning teachers. Beginning teachers are required to meet the needs of learners in a variety of settings and in achieving this demonstrate a certain level of proficiency.

The professional studies programme has emerged to facilitate the delivery of a basic core of generic teaching skills that one would expect all beginning teachers to have upon graduating.

The course focuses on:

the skills of teaching considered necessary for all beginning teachers irrespective of the subject area or topic being taught. In particular, professional studies examines the principles of teaching and learning in a practical and theoretical way so that
teaching performance will facilitate pupil learning in an educationally coherent manner. Professional Studies booklet (1993).

The course aims to:

- assist the students in their development of the essential skills, principles and practices that all beginning teachers need to have to function effectively in the school environment.
- socialise students into the professional role of being a teacher.
- provide a structure in which the students' pastoral care needs can be addressed and met.

The programme emphasises the need for teacher training to take a developmental approach and views the training component as only one stage of the process of becoming a teacher. Scott & Culpan (1988)

Scott and Culpan explain this by suggesting that teacher training should be viewed as a "transitional dimension in a continuum of professional growth". Hence the 'core requirement' of the programme has been stated in competency terms with the term competencies being viewed as "descriptions of desirable attributes in the process of developing".

Competency means that each student, in cooperative consultation should work towards developing the practical skills described. The exact mechanism for that development varies from individual to individual, tutor group to tutor group, but students will be encouraged to establish their own techniques for development. Scott & Culpan (1993).
This statement, indicates a learner centred environment describing the relationship between the learner and the tutor as cooperative. It also suggests that this may vary between individuals and between working groups and that individual learners are responsible for their own learning. All these points are key elements of the experiential learning process. The author and his co-tutor Bert McConnell decided in 1990 to use the experiential learning process as a method of assisting students in the art of developing as beginning teachers. This has not been achieved without problems. These are discussed in chapter 4 under limitation in implementing experiential learning.

Objective:

In recent times there has been increased debate and some scepticism over our schooling system. Educational reformers have pushed for a system in which "active learning", "relevance" and "personalisation" are key elements. Goodlad (1984). In a time when school leaving age has been raised and unemployment is high we need to provide a learning environment that offers some hope and "promotes pedagogical techniques which engage students as active participants in learning". Westheimer Kahne Gertein (1992).

The time is right for those involved in experiential education to extol its merits and outline its potential as a teaching/learning process. It is therefore appropriate in the light of new reforms, to explore the theory and practice of experiential education in relation to preservice teacher education.

In an attempt to explore experiential education and determine for those who have been through this process at the Christchurch College
of Education, whether is has resulted in a more pupil centred classroom, many questions need to be addressed:

What is experiential education? What is the role of the teacher/lecturer/tutor? What is the student/pupil/learner role in the experiential process? What are the advantages and disadvantages in using this process in preservice teacher education? How do the students perceive experiential education? What are the constraints in using this process for beginning teachers starting in a new school?

To respond to the challenge of examining experiential education in its entirely would be an immense task. However the role teachers/lecturers/tutors play in using this as a teaching/learning process for preservice teacher training could be significant if it results in offering pupils a more pupil-centred classroom.

This study has evolved from the author's concern about recent educational reforms both nationally and internationally. There seems to be a need to develop a common set of curriculum goals, national standards and nationwide accountability suggesting that "relevant knowledge is determined by experts". Westheimer Kahne and Gerstein (1992). To determine a specific set of learning goals suitable for all learners in all situations is somewhat autocratic and conservative in its approach.

This report therefore, will address the following objective:

- to examine what characterises the experiential learning approach for teacher education and explore how this differs from mainstream teaching and learning.
Scope and Limitations:

The use of interpretive analysis and the subjective interpretation placed on it by the researcher are well documented and the author has conducted this study fully aware of the problems associated with it.

The author acknowledges a strong bias towards the philosophies behind experiential learning and a strong commitment to ensure pupils have the opportunity to engage in learning that is meaningful and that grows out of the collaborative interest of the pupil and the teacher together.

This view obviously differs from some individuals currently involved in educational reform both in New Zealand and overseas.
CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

Competency based Teacher Education using an Experiential Approach

As part of the literature review on competency based experiential teacher education programmes the first section of this chapter will examine two known competency based teacher education programmes that are using an experiential approach and place them in context with one another:

While literature relating to experiential learning and teacher education is abundant there is much less information that links these two concepts together. There is even less relating teacher education models that use a competency based programme to experiential learning.

The Department of Education Bureau of Instruction a division of Teacher Education and Certification in Kentucky (USA) has developed a competency based model for Teacher Education that incorporates aspects of experiential learning.

Their idea was to provide a curricular framework that incorporated the basic principles of both theoretical and experiential learning.

The similarities with the Christchurch College of Education Secondary Teacher training Professional studies programme are:

- Competency based models are used in pre-service Teacher training.
• The Competency statements are not a definitive list nor the perfect match, in other words the competencies are an indication only and the wording of each can be changed reflecting individual needs.

• The identified competencies are only those that a beginning teacher would be expected to perform as a minimum requirement.

• Revisions, deletions, additions, or modification to these competencies are made as required.

• The competencies are skills that beginning teachers can actually demonstrate.

• Both programmes offer a experiential component that allows students to observe, synthesise, participate and experiment themselves with different teaching techniques.

There are also a number of major differences.

• The competencies and exemplary descriptions are quite different. The Kentucky programmes core competency areas are very general and incorporate both Education theory and professional development. The Christchurch College of Education programme has a more specific content base that targets the generic professional teaching skills, and while there is a link with Education theory and practice this remains a separate area of study.

The Kentucky programmes competencies fall under the following headings. Fig 1.
PRESENTATION OF COMPETENCIES AND EXEMPLARY DESCRIPTORS

Proposed teacher competencies and exemplary descriptions are presented in the following materials in each of eight areas. These are:

I  Orientation to Secondary Education
II  Foundations of Learning and Human Development
III  Generic Teaching Skills
IV  Individualised Educational Planning
V  Teaching Strategies and Methods
VI  Human Interaction in the School
VIII  Student Teaching

For each area there is a recommendation for:

- the instructional program effort (semester hours)
- the program sequences of the area
- the field or laboratory experience to accompany each area program

Fig 1

This is followed by example of specific competencies and exemplary descriptors see Fig 2

Examples of Specific Competencies

COMPETENCY AREA:  I - Orientation To Secondary Education

COMPETENCY STATEMENTS AND EXEMPLARY DESCRIPTIONS:
1. EXPLAINS THE ROLE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN AMERICA - PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE PREDICTIONS

Exemplary Descriptors
a. describes the origin of secondary schools in America
b. identifies changes in secondary schools since 1850
c. analyses the purpose of today’s secondary school in relation to the total spectrum of public education.
d. predicts what secondary schools will be like in the year 2000.

Fig 2

16
The Secondary programme model at the Christchurch College of Education list indicating a more specific list of generic skills.

- Personal Self Esteem
- Basic Lesson Planning
- Basic Presentation Skills
- Basic Classroom Management
- Questioning
- Learning theory and Teaching Strategies
- Non-sexist Teaching
- Mixed Ability Teaching
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Stress Management
Examples of core and expanded competencies from Christchurch programmes: Fig 3.

<table>
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<th>BASIC PRESENTATION SKILLS</th>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Core Competencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>This module will enable students to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate a variety of personal presentation skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrate skill in a range of presentation technologies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Explain ideas and material appropriately and clearly to</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Be aware of the effects of the physical environment on</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Expanded Competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate a variety of personal presentation skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) Demonstrate a knowledge of the ways in which body</td>
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<td>(b) Present oneself confidently in front of a class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(c) Appear enthusiastic about their subject or lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) Demonstrate an ability to project their voice, without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Demonstrate an ability to modulate their voice for effect,</td>
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<tr>
<td>(f) Be able to give clear verbal instructions at an appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrate skill in a range of presentation technologies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Demonstrate a range of blackboard/whiteboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Write clearly and evenly on the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Demonstrate appropriate board division and usage</td>
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<tr>
<td>(iii) Use coloured chalks/pens appropriately on the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Demonstrate a range of overhead transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Write clearly on an overhead transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Use colours appropriately on transparents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Demonstrate correct sitting and focusing of an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Demonstrate the use of an overhead projector in a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Demonstrate a range of tasksheet/resources presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Design layout(s) of tasksheets/resources appropriate to a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Use appropriate production and reproduction methods to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Demonstrate an ability to select and structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Explain material appropriately and clearly to pupils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Choose material appropriate to the ability of a class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Use a range of teaching techniques so as to achieve successful learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Use a range of appropriate questioning techniques successfully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Be aware of the effects of the physical environment on classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will have achieved this when they are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Explain the effect of various physical aspects of the classroom, such as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Suggest appropriate ways in which a classroom's physical environment</td>
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Fig 3

The experiential component in the Kentucky programme relates to combining both theory and practice in a "carefully sequenced progression" which provides "a systematic induction of the student into the profession with a clear merging of theory and practice". Department of Education, Kentucky (1981)
The same view and general statement on merging theory and practice has also been made with regard to the Christchurch College of Education Secondary professional studies programmes. Scott & Culpan (1988). The difference between the general professional studies framework at the Christchurch College of Education, the Kentucky programme and the authors role in delivering the Christchurch programme is in the interpretation and use of Experiential learning as a teaching/learning process.

The Kentucky programme gives no indication of using experiential learning as a process that includes reflection, or self and peer assessment; nor does it indicate what the role of the teacher/lecturer/tutor has or what role the students play in developing their own specific needs.

There is also no indication on how students record progress or how they are finally assessed. This is not to suggest that these aspects don't actually occur, they are just not referred to in the literature describing this programme. This poses the question to what extent Experiential Learning is seen as a process for learning or just a chance to have hands on experience.
LITERATURE THAT SUPPORTS EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS

It is important in this next section to clarify and establish what the experiences, findings and suggestions are of those people involved in using Experiential Education.

There are numerous educators Wiggington (1986), Kolb (1984), Burnard (1988), Heron (1989), Page, Horwood & Gibbons (1987), who have all written about their experiences in using Experiential Education.
A PRACTITIONER'S EXPERIENCE

The Foxfire Approach

Elliot Wiggington in his book 'Sometimes a Shining Moment: The Foxfire Approach' talks about the dispair of approaching his class and confronting them with the issue that "Things just weren't working". He was referring to his role as the teacher, the content, his delivery of content and their general attitude to learning.

After much discussion and debate with his pupils he began to listen to their comments on teaching and learning and what inspired them and what didn't.

see Fig 4.

All through my years of education, there have been classrooms with perfect order, antiseptic smell, droning teachers and frustrated kids. School has sometimes been fun, but it wasn't the teachers that made it that way.

• "We can't go back over it again. We have to read so many pages by the end of the year and we have to move on!" I had a school teacher who repeated that daily.

• I really love teachers who will roll up their sleeves and pitch right in with the kids.

• Kids are so cramped nowadays. It's like the parents wind up. Get up in the morning, dress, go to school, sit in nice rows and never express any dislike. We are not toys made for parents and teachers. We are to be the leaders of tomorrow, but in many cases we never learn about the world until we are forced to live in it.

• Teachers that treat a senior class as maturing young adults may expect to have mature attitudes and ideas returned to them in class. Those who treat seniors as fourth-graders may be expected to have the progress in education that normal fourth-graders achieve.

• One thing that really used to grieve me about some teachers was that when they didn't feel like teaching, they'd give us what seemed like five million words to look up so they could kill time.

Teachers that take time to realise that a student is an individual and not just one out of a group are the best teachers. I had one particular teacher I will never forgot. Once when I received one of my essays back, I found that she had complimented my essay, the topic, and me. She paid special attention to all of her students.

• I wish someone would help me to grow up and open my mind. If not, then I lose out my whole life. I guess I don't know how to think, or I just don't use what I've got. I want to change, but I need help.

Another teacher would always get mad if we didn't agree with her on something. Last year there was a special on TV this teacher was pushing us hard to watch. Not many of the kids did, and this kind of made her mad. I had watched it, and I didn't like it at all. She was asking for opinions and she asked me, and I told her I didn't like it, and I told her why. She got real mad and launched into this big deal about how the kids today didn't have any knowledge of good movies. This kind of burned me up. I mean, she asked for my opinion and I gave it to her and she didn't like it.

Fig 4 Wiggington (1986)

After his experience listening to his pupils, Wiggington began to realise that what he was offering the pupils was not what they needed. In co-operation with his pupils he developed a programme in which
the focus was on a pupil-centred learning experience. He realised that "learning which leads to retention, use and articulation of knowledge happens when we progress from meaningful experience to texts to evaluation and analysis and reflection, and then back to 'hands-on' experience again." Wiggington (1986).

He developed the Foxfire approach to teaching a uniquely experiential programme that was based on the following educational principles. Jennings (1990), pg 6 in Knapp (1992).

- All work must flow from student desire and concerns.
- The work is characterised by student action.
- The work emphasises peer teaching and team work.
- The work must be clearly connected to the real world outside the classroom.
- Students must take the time to reflect upon experiences.

Knapp (1992) emphasises the point that success in using an experiential model similar to Wiggington requires an approach to that is based upon "a positive and open climate". Individuals must "feel that they can trust each other and express their thoughts and feelings about how they learn best and what might be blocking them from learning". Both Wiggington (1986) and Knapp (1992) are indicating that teachers need to help students analyse the characteristics of meaningful learning and understand the principle behind why it was so meaningful. Only when this is done will teachers begin to develop programmes that effectively provide the learner with a valuable learning experience. This process is even more important for those training teachers as Wiggington (1986) acknowledges in his book.
"The fact is some schools of education with which I am familiar are about as close to being worthless as I can imagine. The very way their professors teach contradicts everything we know about the forceful acquisition of knowledge. Most of them, quite simply, should not be allowed to graduate teachers at the present time".
(p.282)

Open High School experience

In describing their experiences with the walkabout programme at the Mountain Open High School Horwood and Gibbons (1987) found the opposite reaction to Wigginton's earlier experiences when listening to pupils talk about teachers and learning. The Mountain Open High School programme is described as "intensely experiential and challenging; it is holistic, drawing on the personal and spiritual resources of the individual as well as their knowledge and skill". Horwood & Gibbons (1987).

They found that the teachers were critical and reflective practitioners who were actively involved in trying to "learn new things, try new tasks, and display the same joy in learning expected of the students." Horwood & Gibbons (1987).

This is supported by the following comments from pupils when describing their teachers:

- They know that they have the skill and that they don't know everything; and they like learning;
- They always have time for you;
- Mountain Open High School teachers treat students like people, with more insight, like themselves;
• What I really like is the way the classes are run. You know we
don't sit there, like you do in a traditional class.

Horwood & Gibbons found that adjectives were used to describe
teachers as caring, good-humoured, kind, tolerant and understanding.
They also noted that pupils described how the 'dynamic experiential
approach' put them ahead of friends in other colleges both in substance
and in enthusiasm. Students at the Christchurch College of Education
involved in the authors experiential programme support the view of
teachers and learning as exposed by Horwood and Gibbons (1987) in
their research. Students commenting after their first term experience
made the following statements in their evaluations.

"Its been fun learning together. The support and encouragement
has been excellent. I've had heaps of laughs and made some neat
friends. We've discussed lots of things I have wondered about
and I look forward to seeing how it fleshes out. Neat to see how
peoples personalities shine through when they teach. The
feedback has been valuable."

"Talking to others I think we are very lucky."

"I am finding experiential model useful - helps me extend myself.
Atmosphere in this group is excellent - the lack of desks definitely
influential in this."

"I enjoy the course immensely ... the approach that you take has
been great! I was disparaging about the prospect of Prof. Studies
prior to enrolment, largely based on the experiences of friends in
years gone by - those friends can't believe what's happening in
this group."
"I really like the way we have been doing 'experiential' learning. I like our relaxed Tutor group environment - I have learnt a lot through the experiential model. I have had a lot of fun, in the way we've been learning."

"This course is really encouraging me to extend myself which is good. The successful way the group is working is largely due to your easy going working relationship and emphasis on the contract (great ideas - sets ground rules). I enjoy the group work and support from all members of the group. I enjoy your professionalism."

"- great styles of teaching create a friendly atmosphere where I'm not afraid to comment on particular issues that bother me.
- great group work. I've learnt a bit from the other members of the class.
- approachable tutors. Thanks.
- concern for me at all times."

The pupils in Wigginton's earlier experiences were clearly against the delivery of facts and information and wanted the basic skills to perform tasks where they had opportunity to use their skills and gain feedback on their performance.

It is important to allow students the opportunity to participate in what Wigginton (1986) now calls the 'natural ebb and flow between experience and the more passive reception of information and concepts and back to experience again'. In doing this students are equipped with new ideas, meaning and more questions to ask. In this
situation the learning process becomes more active, meaningful and matched to student-centred outcomes.

As Piaget said "Every time we teach a child something, we keep them from inventing it themselves. On the other hand, that which we allow them to discover for themselves will remain with them," Piaget (1939).

The concept of a meaningful experience and its relation to a particular subject can be open to interpretation. How a particular teacher and his/her students approach and conduct the experience will determine whether it is meaningful or not. Wigginton explains that "though hands on meaningful experiences may be the best way to learn it is not the only key to learning, and it remains (and should remain) only one of the methods in our bag of tricks". For example we cannot fly pupils all around the country just to experience bungy jumping in Queenstown or cheese making on the West Coast of New Zealand.

He initially took a huge risk in sitting down with his pupils and admitting "things just weren't working" but in doing so, he now has a much better understanding of how his pupils want to learn. He now subscribes to the definition of learning advanced by the Association of Experiential Education which reads in part "It occurs when newly acquired skills are applied through direct and active personal experience to illuminate, reinforce and internalise cognitive learning ...". Wigginton (1986). Elliot Wigginton's work is widely publicised and he has been described as one of the best-known High School teachers in America based on his approach to teaching and learning.
AN ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY

Developing an ethical philosophy for experiential learning is an important factor in acknowledging what it is and also in providing an holistic framework.

William James described by Homer Page (1987) as "An Ethical Philosopher for Experiential Education" stated that the 'measure of a philosophy should be its practical value'. He believed that human activity was practical and to deny this "would be out of touch with the reality of human experience". Page (1987).

He goes on to say that "A practical philosophy must provide a basis for hypotheses that can guide action. The verification of these hypotheses will occur as the action derived from them is played out, and real people, experiencing real consequences, evaluate those consequences for their lives". Elliot Wigginton's pupils have certainly described some of the philosophies behind what they've experienced during their schooling and judged it accordingly.

James believed individuals should be 'freely acting and self-initiating individuals'. His vision was for personal freedom. However, this is hard to achieve in the conservative and controlling climate we all live in today. James' view could only occur in an "universe that is not determined, is pluralistic and has in it free human agents."

Homer Page identifies four propositions put forward by James and suggests that when they are examined together they provide a framework for an ethic for experiential education.
He describes these four propositions as follows:

(1) Each individual human being is capable of making free choices which lead to action, and he/she is, therefore, responsible for the consequences of his/her own behaviour.

(2) Truth does not exist abstractly, but is rather developed through reflection upon the consequences of one's actions and the actions of others.

(3) An individual becomes fully human, and capable of experiencing happiness and joy only as he/she actively engages the natural environment and the world of other human beings through the experience of empathy.

(4) The truly mature person will have the strength of character to sacrifice his/her own personal comfort to challenge dehumanising aspect of the world, and will seek to give testimony through personal action to the possibility of a better world.

These four propositions highlight a number of key principles that are common in Experiential Education programmes. The first principle is based on the notion that individuals and learners should have freedom and responsibility and be able to "make choices and take risks that will permit the student to learn what the consequences of particular action might be. Experience should permit the development of competencies, and it should involve opportunities to practice caring for others." Page (1987). This is consistent with Heron's view of what he calls 'The Modern Revolution in Learning' (1989).
The second principle is concerned with 'Truth and Reflection' and involves individuals gaining feedback on their experience.

Page elaborates on this by saying "it is in experience and the evaluation of that experience that truth emerges, but that thought is never complete until the last possible experience has been played out. Experiential educators must teach participants to use experience to discover truth, and they must provide a framework by which criteria for evaluating ethical truth may be grounded." Page (1987).

The third principle is based on 'Happiness and Joy'. For individuals working in experiential groups this is based on group unity, honesty, respect and empathy. It involves establishing a climate which acknowledges an individuals physical and emotional safety by "accepting the way in which we enter the world of others" and how we "understand the structure of meaning of others and come to understand their action in terms of their internal logic, aesthetic and power".

The fourth principle highlights the need for learners to have the courage and strength "for connecting beyond oneself". Individuals need to be able to believe in ideas and practices that involve inclusive and not forced into experiences that don't encourage unity for individuals and communities.

Aspects of these four propositions have been included in the Experiential education programme at the Christchurch College of Education by the author. How these are applied in reality are dealt with in more detail in chapter 2.

29
Theoretical considerations

Burnard (1988) indicates that "one of the problems of legitimising experiential learning methods is that they have not had a sound theoretical basis on which to stand".

He suggests that there needs to be 'A theory of knowledge and indicates it may serve two purposes.

1 to clarify the concept of experiential learning;
2 to offer the ground on which experiential learning research can be based.

He bases his theory on three domains

1 propositional knowledge
2 practical knowledge
3 experiential knowledge.

While all these domains can stand as discreet types of knowledge he makes the point that they are inter-related and complement each other.

Propositional knowledge which Burnard (1988) describes as "that which is contained in theories and text books" is knowledge that is accumulated through a build up of a considerable bank of facts, theories and ideas about a subject, person or thing". This knowledge can exist without experiential knowledge, for example an individual may have some information about how to run a questioning sequence with a class, be able to explain how it's done theoretically, but never have had any experiential knowledge.

Practical knowledge relates to the acquisition of skills. For students practicing questioning techniques by themselves or in peers to develop
the actual skills before they stand up in class is an example of practical knowledge.

In many schools these two areas of knowledge are traditionally used by teachers either individually or together. In more recent times we've begun to see the emergence of transition programmes which in some cases have introduced material that relates more to the affective domain; the area that deals more with the feelings and emotion and is based in experiential knowledge. Experiential knowledge as Burnard (1988) describe is "important personal knowledge", it "cannot be taught" and is by "direct encounter with a subject, person or thing. This is consistent with Herons (1989) description of experiential learning and those of Chapman McPhee and Proudman (1992) in describing 'what is Experiential Education'.

Heron (1989) has described the process of experiential learning in higher and continuing education as 'The modern revolution in learning! He states that it is based on "the basic and very simple premise that student learning is self directed: it rests on the autonomous exercise of intelligence, choice and interest".

He sees learning in the same context as Burnard (1988) but instead of three areas of knowledge he acknowledges four and calls this manifold learning. His fourth concept is 'Imaginal learning'. He describes this as "learning configurations of form and process. It involves an intuitive grasp of a whole as shape or sequence. It is expressed in the symbolism of line, shape, colour, proportion, succession, sound, rhythm, movement. This is the intuitive, image level of learning". Heron (1989).
Both Herons list and Burnards are put beside one another in Fig 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burnard</th>
<th>Heron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Propositional learning</td>
<td>Practical learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical learning</td>
<td>Conceptual learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential learning</td>
<td>Imaginal learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 5

Heron also indicates that his four domains "are distinct; they cannot be reduced to each other. At the same time, however they inform, support and enhance each other, they constitute an up-hierarchy, with the ones higher in this list being grounded in those that are lower", see Fig 6 Heron (1989)

![Diagram of manifold learning](image)

**Figure 6 Manifold learning.** Heron (1989)

The theory of Experiential learning is based on the process of learning from an experiential encounter in which students are then required to reflect upon the experience to discover new learning.
Models which describe this process are put forward by Kolb, Burnard and Heron and are described in the following section, 'Models of Experiential Learning.'

The process of 'reflection' as a learning tool is also covered in this section.

The models of experiential learning and the subsequent description of reflection will draw together Burnard's three areas of knowledge and will provide a process for the application of experiential learning theory.

Models of Experiential Learning

Kolb (1984) described Experiential learning as a cycle which includes a concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. An adaptation of Kolbs cycle is described by Burnard (1989).

see Fig 7.

![Diagram]

1. An Experience

2. Reflection upon that experience

3. Development of theories/models out of that reflection

4. Application of the new learning to the 'real' situation

Fig 7
Burnard has adapted and modified Kolb's original cycle even further to provide a model that demonstrates how facilitators/teachers can use practical experiences for "planning theoretical 'blocks' of study Burnard (1986) in Burnard (1989)". This model is shown in Fig 8.

![Diagram]

1. Practical experience

5. Evaluation of learning and planning to apply the learning

4. Discussion based on the outcomes of reflection. New learning is planned and developed.

2. Showing of experience

3. Reflection in a group on that experience

Fig 8 Burnard (1989)

This model combines both propositional, experiential and practical knowledge in a process that is learner centred, active and dynamic.

Stage 1, 2 and 3 are all based on experiential knowledge. Stage 4 uses all three areas of knowledge propositional, practical and experiential in determining new skills, strategies and theories for the learner. Stage 5 again uses all three in providing both and opportunity to test the new learning and in evaluating the application of it in a particular setting. Burnard (1989) suggests it should be used "pragmatically to plan future action".
A further adaptation of this model for the practical use of assisting teacher in training has been designed by Law & Dunmill 1991 and is described in chapter 2 Fig ?.

The implications of the experiential process described in Fig 8 above to learning has major implications to the role of the teacher. Burnard (1989) states that:

"Given the subjective, idiosyncratic nature of experiential knowledge, each student's perception of the "experience" may be different and so will be their reflections upon that experience. It is not for the tutors to force their own perceptions of these experiences on to the students, but to play a facilitative role. A facilitative tutor encourages the student to explore, question, doubt and criticise their own perceptions and to draw out their own meanings from these experiences."

The sensitive tutor will bear in mind two principles: (1) the uniqueness of the students' personal experience, and (2) the need to draw together some sort of consensus reality for application of new ideas in other situations. It is asserted here, that in the past, tutors have tended to act as though there were only a consensus reality. If the concept of experiential knowledge as accepted, then 'multiple realities' are seen to be possible. In the light of our own personal histories, we each look out on to the world from a different perspective, and view that world uniquely. It is this unique viewpoint that makes for multiple realities. There is no doubting, however, that there is equally the need for the consensus viewpoint. If too much attention is paid to experiential knowledge, then the students may get lost in a sophisticated view of the world. If, on the other hand, too much emphasis is placed on propositional and practical knowledge, then personal experience is downgraded and students learn not to value their own feelings, ideas
and perceptions. A combination of experiential, propositional and practical knowledge offers a particularly comprehensive and useful basis for the development of sound educational practice."

This view of teachers adopting a facilitative role in the teaching/learning process is also supported by Heron (1989), Chapman (1992), Proudman (1992), Cowan (1988), Warren (1988), Law (1992) et al.

Heron's (1989) model of an experiential learning cycle is based on effective facilitation and he calls it the "learning revolution that is currently afoot".

By a facilitator Heron means ...

"a person who has the role of helping participants to learn in an experiential group. The facilitator will normally be formally appointed to this role by whatever organisation is sponsoring the group, and the group members will voluntarily accept the facilitator in this role."

He goes on to qualify this by describing a facilitator as a ...

"a person who wants to provide conditions for the development of autonomous learning, and can move swiftly and elegantly, as the context requires, between three political modes: making decisions FOR learners, making decisions WITH learners, and delegating decisions TO learners."

Heron (1989) believes that the art of effective facilitation is an integral part of the experiential process. An effective facilitator needs to know "when to take responsibility for what at different stages of the experiential learning cycle". His model of how to structure experiential learning describes two cycles. (Fig 9).
The first cycle indicates an initial 'encounter' with a particular skill or concept. The second cycle is a much deeper encounter based on knowledge from feedback. The feedback process usually occurs during the reflection phase Kolb (1984) Burnard (1989) and Cowan (1988) and also immediately after practice. Heron (1989)

The role of the facilitator in each of these aspects of experiential learning is crucial in providing a structure for each process to occur.

A simplified version of Herons model is shown in Fig 10.

Figure 9 The experiential learning cycle

Figure 10 Stages of an exercise
He outlines the process of modelling and describing a skill followed by practice, feedback on practice, a rerun of the skill, reflection on performance and the review based on further feedback.

The concept of reruns is based of the notion that initial feedback based on performance will give learners a much better experiential base in which to then improve a second time.

This notion highlights the importance of feedback and reflection; two key elements in the experiential learning model used by the author in his programme and discussed in further detail in chapter 2 of this report.

Heron's work is based on the idea that student learning should be more self directed and that the role of the teacher is to facilitate that process. It is interesting to note that this concept has support from the pupils in class when described what they wanted from teachers. Wiggington (1986). Horwood and Gibbons (1987) also supports this based on this experience with pupils at the Mountain Open High School.

Karen Warren who is a teacher/instructor at Hampshire College in Massachusetts has asked the question 'how can we teach a theory of what we practice?' The answer to that she says "is experientially". Learners need to develop actual skills that require practice refinement and then further practice.

Karen Warren is using experiential learning as a process to introduce the theory of experiential education. In doing so she has adopted a student-centred model for learning.
Her theoretical model of Experiential education is based on the student directed classroom. She is working with experiential learning under similar constraints to the author, the common elements are described below.

- It takes place predominantly within four walls.
- It is sandwiched in a one or two hour time block for 6 hours a week in a busy College schedule.

Warren's model is based on the following elements:
1. Students determine the syllabus;
2. Students prioritise topic areas;
3. Students regulate class members commitment;
4. Students facilitate actual class sessions;
5. Students undertake individual or group inspired projects;
6. Students are engaged in on-going evaluation.

In using this process Warren (1988) has described this process as:
"different from traditional educational theory courses which attempt to convey a body of knowledge that the teacher or the institute deems important, the student-defined curriculum promotes a shift from giving an education to, in the words of Adrienne Rich, 'claiming an education'." Rich (1979) in Warren (1988).

An interesting point that Warren makes and certainly one the author's students would agree with is the extent to which they are all trying to "achieve a sense of themselves in an often vast and impersonal education process." Warren (1988)
The key to the success of Warren's programme is the shift in power from the teacher to the learner. The teacher becomes a facilitation of student directed learning. Heron (1989), Burnard (1989), Cowan (1988) et al would also agree with this, but in doing so they are not suggesting teachers should just abdicate their authority. They are clearly indicating it is transferring authority to the students. This allows the teacher to become an integral group member and promote empowerment within the group.

**Power and the Learner:**

Power has generally resulted in authority and depending on how that power is used has given rise to different political options for teachers/facilitators.

Implicit in Heron's (1989) description of the decision making process is his decision-modes for choosing, planning and learning based on three political positions that he calls the 'planning dimension for experiential learning.'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy</th>
<th>LEVEL 1 Decision-mode used for choosing ...</th>
<th>LEVEL 2 Decision-modes used in planning, which includes a choice of ...</th>
<th>LEVEL 3 Decision-modes used in learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-operation</td>
<td><strong>Negotiation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negotiation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negotiation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td><strong>Delegation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delegation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delegation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 11  The use of decision-modes on three levels*

Heron's concern with the teaching/learning process is **Who** makes the decisions about:

- what people learn
- how they learn
The...
- facilitator/teacher alone (the hierarchical mode)
- facilitator/teacher and learners (the co-operative mode)
- learners alone (the autonomous mode)

Heron Fig 11 (1989) has provided facilitators with a framework to assist them in developing a style based on different forms of power and control in planning experiential learning. For example a conventional approach to teaching/learning process might involve a combination of direction-negotiation-delegation. A more liberal approach may involve Negotiation-delegation-delegation.

Heron expands this view in Fig 12 by introducing two different concepts within the planning process, Apollonian and Dionysian planning.

By Apollonian planning he means: "the detailed structuring of future time with topics, resources and methods". Heron (1989). Dionysian planning by contrast is "impromptu, often improvisatory, responding flexibly and imaginatively to the presence of the group or individual." Heron (1989).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apollonian</th>
<th>Dionysian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL 1</strong></td>
<td>Decision-mode for choosing...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autocratic direction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative direction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional delegation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual delegation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL 2</strong></td>
<td>a decision-mode for planning...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL 3</strong></td>
<td>a decision-mode for learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 12 Apollonian and Dionysian use of decision-levels and decision-modes
Experiential learning normally moves from an initial structure (Apollonian planning) towards more Dionysian planning. If you are meeting the needs of the learners and follow the process of developing skills and knowledge using an experiential model you may often find yourself in co-operation with the learner.

The dotted line in the diagram in Fig. 12 indicates a possible level of Apollonian and Dionysian decision modes. Normally in-service work is decided by using the apollonian mode and results in a structuring of time, topic resources and methods over a short period of time and therefore may not allow for any Dionysian decisions.

Heron (1989) has been at the forefront of helping teacher/facilitators recognise the options they have when working with experiential groups. A more simplified version of his decision modes based on three recognised political options available to us are shown in Fig 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy</th>
<th>Co-operation</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You decide all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. You decide some</td>
<td>You with group decide some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. You decide some</td>
<td>You with group decide some</td>
<td>Group decide some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. You decide some</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group decide some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You with group decide some</td>
<td>Group decide some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You with group decide all</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group decide all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 13 Seven ways of using decision-modes in planning*

This model clearly defines the boundaries of power between the learner and the teacher/facilitator.

Karen Warren (1988) in her experiential classroom model indicated that the "goal in the student-directed model is to empower rather than hold power over". She states that "this does not mean teachers
withdraw from power by renouncing their authority" and Heron (1989) and Wigginton (1986) would support her in this view.

Warren shows the comparison of power within her student-directed classroom between the student and the teacher/facilitator in Fig 14 and Fig 15 respectively.

The students power increases during the experiential process in Fig 14 indicating a move by the teacher to gradually empower the students more. This results in self determination and would comfortably fit Herons (1989) concept of a facilitator where the teacher functions in a co-operative guidance role initially but moves towards autonomy for the learner.

In this model Warren (1985) points out that:

After the students have attained self determination, intervention by the teacher acting as a leader rather than a group member occurs only in situations when the group lacks the skills to deal with obstacles they encounter.

This coincides with the slight variations at times in the relationship between the student and teachers power levels as shown in Fig 14 & 15.

Generally the teacher/facilitators power decreases as the course progresses in contrast to that of the students.
Figure 14
Wigginton (1986) suggests that teachers should at some stage acknowledge the extent of their power. He indicates that "the understanding (or misunderstanding) and the application (or
misapplication) of that power determines our success or failure as teachers". His experience in sitting down with his class described early in this chapter would support this statement. It can also determine the success and or failure of students.

Teacher/facilitators have immense power over students when used in inappropriate ways.

As Wigginton (1986) points out teachers have the following weapons. (A summarised version).

- they're older than most of them
- they have experience on their side
- they have the authority within their position as a teacher
- they have disciplinary actions available to them
- they have grade or mark books
- they can use well chosen words as put downs
- they can divide students amongst themselves and breaking them up into worrying factions
- they have power through careful selection and manipulation
- they can make some students outcasts
- they can ignore students
- they make students hate a particular subject or learning itself.

Having said this Wigginton also acknowledges that it doesn't have to be that way and in fact we can do the complete opposite as he himself has proved. Warren (1988) Heron (1989) Burnard (1989) Chapman (1992) McPhee (1992) Proudman (1992) have all focused in the positive aspects of empowering student using Experiential learning techniques and see this in general terms as a model for students to actively seek an education.
The role of the teacher/facilitator and that of the students becomes a crucial factor in the balance of power that should exist in any experiential model.

The role of the teacher/facilitator and that of the student will be discussed in relation to the model used with the Christchurch College of Educations Professional studies group in detail in chapter 2.
Chapter 2

Key Elements of the Author's Experiential Programme

This chapter has been written to provide the reader with an understanding of the author's programme.

This chapter identifies the key elements that form the basis of this experiential model and illustrates how the author and co-tutors have developed the programme based on current literature. The key concepts include:

- The role of the tutor
- The Tutor/students interaction
- Self and Peer assessment
- Reflection

These key concepts are based on the notion that experiential education is based on a series of critical relationships: the learner to self, the learner to teacher, and the learner to the learning environment. All three relationships are important and occur in varying degrees during the learning experience. These relationships are two way and highly dynamic.

It is not intended that a blow by blow account of the year be described and discussed but an overview of the key concepts that make this teacher education process essentially experiential. Literature not previously outlined but specific to these key concepts will also be included in this chapter in support of the process/es used. The author will also indicate where specific concepts, processes differ from other professional studies groups at the College of Education.
The role of the tutor.

After studying and absorbing a considerable amount of literature on experiential learning the author and his co-tutor had to identify key aspects that indicated what their own roles in the programme should be. It involved both tutors deciding, along with the students, what action was required on their behalf to make the experience as student-centred as possible.

In working through this exercise the author and co-tutor were aware of some of Wiggington's (1986) revelations on Teacher/student relationships outlined earlier in chapter 1 Fig 4.

Elliot Wiggington's teaching experience and his descriptions of teacher/student relationships has led the author of this report to the conclusion that teachers, lecturers and instructors need to adopt a facilitator role in teaching and facilitate learning through acknowledging an individuals strengths, interests and concerns.

A description of the role of a facilitator was outlined in the previous chapter under 'Models of Experiential Learning'. Heron (1989)

Heron's description and subsequent qualification was to provide a basis from which the author and co-tutor would facilitate learning within the experiential group at the Christchurch College of Education.

After considering a summarised version of Heron's (1989) political modes of how teachers operate, the author modified this as represented in Fig 16. Both tutors simply acknowledged that they would use all
three modes of decision making depending on the identified needs of the group. The key issue was to what extent each political mode should be used and when to use it.

**Political Modes**

### Hierarchical:
This is where the teacher directs the learning process by:

- exercising their power over student learning
- organising and doing things for the learner
- teaching from the front by thinking and acting on behalf of the learner
- deciding the objectives
- interpreting and giving the aims and objectives meaning
- dealing with any resistance by managing the learner
- developing and controlling group feelings
- providing a structure for learning
- taking responsibility for the learner
- making all major decisions on all dimension of the learning process

### Co-operative:
Here the teacher shares power over the learning process by:

- assisting the learner to become more self-directed in the various forms of learning
  - by conferring with the teacher
- prompting and helping the learner to decide on the programme
- helping the learner by processing learning experiences
- assisting the learner to confront and deal with individual problems/issues
- sharing their view among many
- negotiating learning outcomes
- collaborating with learners in devising the learning process
- facilitating decision-making

### Autonomous:
The teacher respects the autonomy of the learner by:

- not doing things for or with the learner
- giving them freedom to choose their own way
- allowing the learner to exercise their own judgement without any intervention from others
- allowing them to evolve their own programme without any guidance or assistance
- allowing them to find and develop meaning from their experiences
- allowing them to confront their own problems
- not prompting
- allowing total self-directed practice
- giving individual space and time

---

*Figure 16*

The author and co-tutor decided initially that at the beginning of the year the first few weeks would probably be more hierarchical. The reasons behind this were two-fold.
Firstly to provide a basis for experiential learning from within a conservative tertiary institution that required a formal assessment process and was constrained by a timetable and set requirements. Secondly to ease students slowly from what they were more accustomed to, to a more experiential process.

This is supported by Warren (1988) who reported that "Students who are a product of a traditionally teacher-directed system need some assistance in making that exhilarating but unfamiliar jump to self-determination".

It is important when making this transition that teachers provide an initial structure and refocus students on the new agenda.

As Warren (1988) points out "The teacher's role in the student-directed classroom is challenging in its subtlety. I sometimes feel as if I'm tiptoeing the line between intervention and stepping back. As most experiential educators can affirm, it's an intuitive guess at times whether to:

1. actively facilitate the process to either maximise learning or to keep if from becoming mis-educative; or
2. let the students' struggle with the experience serve as the didactic lesson."

Due to the restraints of a 1 yr course and timetabled classes the author and co-tutor while deciding to use both options tended to use option 1 more often that option 2 as a general rule when students were in College during the first part of the year.
Acknowledging that most students would find the experiential approach somewhat different from what they had previously experienced both tutors decided initially to actively facilitate the course at the beginning then move towards self-directed experiential learning. The aim of the author and co-tutor was to move from a hierarchical start as quickly as possible into a co-operative team environment and in the last part of the year allow for autonomous self-directed study.

Heron (1989) uses the term 'hierarchical impulse' in describing the active facilitation process at the beginning of a course.

Having decided this, for the students, it was felt that the students should have input into how both tutors functioned and operated within the group.
The Tutor/Student interaction

This was a chance for both tutors to examine their role in detail in light of how the students perceived it. This was achieved by developing a group contract at the beginning of the year to establish some basic ground rules for functioning as an experiential group. Project Adventure Inc (1971) have been using contracts in their experiential adventure based learning programmes for a number of years. Their ideas for developing group contracts is based on the notion that:

"Whether from an educational or therapeutic point of view, effective learning occurs in an environment where what is learned can be put into practice and the learner can receive accurate feedback and reinforcement. Learning experientially in groups is particularly effective in encouraging such learning and supporting individuals who are developing new approaches and behaviours in their lives." 
Adventure Based Counselling course notes (1989).

The purpose behind this statement and one the author supports is the concept of having a 'safe' environment both emotionally and physically for student 'taking risks' on the basis of receiving feedback on their performance. It helps individuals group members to 'think about the group, their own roles and behaviours in it'. Project Adventure course note (1989). The contract in effect supports this process, the facilitators role within it is to help maintain individual safety. In agreeing to the contract the author and co-tutor had to acknowledge, what the students perceived their role to be and negotiate with them on specific things they felt unhappy with. This in itself proved to be an enlightening experience for both the author and co-tutor in empowering the students right at the beginning of the year.
The aim of developing a contract was to set out the criteria to establish a learning environment that was based on dignity and worth for both parties. It was to become a basis for an ethical philosophy, (Page 1987) on how this experiential group would function. It also took into consideration the first three propositions put forward by James (in Page 1987) for establishing an ethical philosophy for experiential learning. This was also an attempt at the beginning of the year to establish a working relationship that would hopefully avoid the claims that Wiggingtons (1986) students made about teachers. The contract was designed mainly by the students with minor input from both tutors.

After a brainstorming session about what should be in a contract five key elements emerged from the group.

1. An ultimate goal for the year
2. Tutors role within the group
3. The students role
4. Basic ground rules for establishing a working relationship
5. Dealing with breaches of the contract.

After further brainstorming and deliberation each of the five areas were discussed and the students began to design the contract. In working through this process the following key points emerged;

1. The contact has to be revisited regularly for changes;
2. The responsibility to effect change and monitor individuals commitment to this document was everyone's responsibility not that of the tutors alone;
3. The contract was owned by everyone in the group;
4. The contract was to be kept brief and to the point outlining key objectives.

Contract

The document as it stood on the 25th August 1993 is outline in Fig B.
CONTRACT
Law/McConnell Syndicate

ULTIMATE GOAL
To recognise and to help serve the educational and life skill needs of students.

TUTORS PART
Share knowledge and experience
Guidance
Being consistent
Advocacy
Constructive criticism
Positive reinforcement
Critical appraisal
Encouragement
Professional role models
Varied approaches
Accessibility/approachability
Empowerment
Facilitate learning
Unbiased/objective

'OUR PART'
Manaki - tanga
Patience
Taking risks and supporting others
Sharing experiences
Civility
Listen and respect others views
Co-operation

Participation - Do your best
Commitment
Enthusiasm
Being focused
Be prepared
Be punctual

Provide feedback for others
Constructive criticism
Take criticism
Self analysis and reflection
Learn from mistakes and successes

Self motivated
Open minded - open to new ideas
Ask for help, ask questions
Be relaxed, laugh

HOW SHALL WE OPERATE - GROUNDRULES
Honesty
Openness
Confidentiality
Mutual respect
Listening
Support
No put downs
Inclusive language

Use 'I' statements/ speak for yourself

How do we deal with breaches of the contract?
Strategies:

Minor Talk about it: people accepting of the correction.
All agree to be reminded, either in the group or individually.

Major Person who feels it is major explains to group and we make time to discuss.
If not the sort of thing that needs to be made public to group, eg.
profile
- bring in mediator, mutually acceptable to both parties.
1. Group time to deal with issue.
2. Mediation for conflict between individuals.

Figure B
After the completion of the first draft students were given the option to opt into another tutor group, if they felt uncomfortable. Nobody took this option.

In developing the contract, the students identified several key aspects of learning that the tutors and students needed to address.

Key Process tools

They identified four key process tools
1. A Feedback tool to gain information on their mistakes and successes.
2. A process for using the information gained during feedback for reflection an self analysis.
3. A process for constructive guidance from both tutors.
4. A way to move towards student empowerment and a student centred environment.

Self and Peer Feedback

The key aspects related to specific process tools that were to become significant factors in determining the experiential nature of this group. The author is not aware of any other groups using contracts as a process to identify specific tools for learning. The students indicated they wanted constructive criticised and positive reinforcement from peers and tutors alike. The result of this was the identification of a mechanism for providing effective feedback. The feedback model used originally was a John Heron Model received by the author and co-tutor at a facilitators course in Wellington in 1988. This model has since been modified and adapted slightly see (Fig 17) and is now used by several other groups within the professional studies programme as a feedback model.
SELF AND PEER ASSESSMENT - FEEDBACK MODEL

The aim of this model is for a person to be accurate in their self-assessment. This full process can be used by a group of peers whose experience is relevant to the matter to be assessed. A shortened procedure (omitting steps 1 and 2) can be used whenever a member of the group requires feedback on the performance of something which is within the capacity of the others to judge. It is important that the process, its rules and rationale (highlighted in point No.6) is first outlined to the group by the person who will act as the Facilitator.

1. The person to be assessed (the 'Candidate') meets with a representative group of his/her peers. Six to eight persons whose experience is relevant to the procedure, is a useful group.

2. They all (including the Candidate) work to reach agreement on the criteria of competence.

3. The Candidate chooses a Facilitator to attend to the rest of the process. The Facilitator then briefly outlines the process to the full group.

4. The Candidate assesses her/himself, by giving themselves advice on things they need to improve upon, in the light of the criteria - in the presence of the peer group. S/he nominates any specific criteria on which s/he requests detail for focussed feedback from the group.

5. The peers then give their advice in light of the candidate’s competence with supporting evidence where possible. Even slight doubts should be raised as these can be constructive and helpful, but the feedback is given responsibly and supportively - i.e. it describes behaviour rather than judging or labelling it: it is specific, not general; it is directed towards behaviour the candidate can do something about, not towards unchangeable personal characteristics.

6. Throughout, the Candidate listens without comment. S/he has previously been encouraged to discriminate carefully among the comments made, sifting (silently) considering, and accepting or rejecting the feedback (also silently), as s/he wishes. The purpose is to refine the Candidate's self assessment.

7. There is then an assessment of the candidates strengths. Significant time is given for the peers to give their impressions in the light of the criteria, beginning with the candidate's comments. This round is important (and should never be omitted), for its affirmative, validating power. These comments are similarly made - responsibly and supportively, emphasising specific strengths.

8. There is no further discussion of the feedback.

Notes for Facilitator

- Candidate begins each round.
- Candidate chooses the order of either advice or strengths first.
- Don’t allow missing of strength comments, by either the candidate or peers.
- All feedback is directed (in first person) to the Candidate, not to Facilitator.
- Facilitator interrupts dialogue. Requests for clarity or specificity to be made though the Facilitator.
- No 'talking about' the feedback - during or after.
- Peers are advised to 'pass' (without explanation) only on the advice round. They must acknowledge some strength/s.
- Only one person to be the subject of feedback at once.

Adapted from the work of John Heron
Once the author and co-tutor had introduced the feedback model this procedure became an effective tool for giving and receiving information on ones performance or development. Students have indicated in chapter 4 how effective this tool actually was. The purpose of giving feedback was to:-

- reinforce or change a students behaviour or performance
- increase a students ability to assess themselves
- help students communicate how their behaviour or performance was affecting others
- help students keep their behaviour and performance "on target".
- help students achieve their own set goals and competency targets.

They also identified the need for self analysis through reflection. While the feedback model had become the tool for gaining information on performance, a process and structure for reflection was seen as equally important. Along with the students the tutors developed a process to assist them in reflecting on the information they had received from peers, tutors, associates and pupils they had taught.

In developing a process there was a need to identify what the notion of reflection actually meant and to place it in a context within teacher education.

**Reflection**

Reflection does not just refer to knowledge alone, it also takes into consideration an individual's feelings and emotions. It is designed to help learners construct meaning out of their experience and that may take place either in class of at a later date away from the traditional learning environment.
Horwood (1989) indicated that reflection is hard mental work, it involves scanning past thought, seeking connections, discrepancies and meanings. He suggested that the mental work of reflection includes - deliberation (methodical and slow), rumination (thorough chewing), pondering (weighing or judging), and musing (aimless speculation).

The goal of reflection is for the learner to construct meanings out of their experiences ... "the product is discovery of new connections between the most recent experience and past ones". Horwood (1989)


To link this notion of reflection to teacher education both tutors needed to expand their view of students as not merely participants, but as active learners who often bring their own agenda to the learning situation.

In reflecting on the literature Heron (1989) Wiggington (1986) Proudman (1992) and Warren (1988) indicate that a model that includes reflective teaching techniques requires more than just exploration between the learner and the content in order to advance the learner.

They recognise that the role of the facilitators in guiding reflective action as an important factor in helping learners construct meaning out of their experience.

For the author and co-tutor two questions became apparent, firstly how were they as tutors going to manage reflection time, and secondly, what
strategies were they going to develop with the students to best help them use this process?

As Horwood (1989) describes it "reflection does take time and there is no fast food in the reflection deli".

To manage reflection time both tutors needed to provide a learner centred environment, as opposed to a teacher centred environment (see Fig A) that allowed learners to interact with each other, with both tutors and have time to think.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER CENTRED</th>
<th>LEARNER CENTRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class taught as one group.</td>
<td>Group or individual learning programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s main function is to instruct.</td>
<td>Teacher’s main function is to evoke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasises teacher as a judge.</td>
<td>Emphasises teacher as a facilitator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher selects and sets learning tasks.</td>
<td>Learners contribute to selection and setting of tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages Teacher/Learner interaction.</td>
<td>Encourages Learner/Learner interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not encourage group work.</td>
<td>Encourages group work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation the sole domain of the teacher.</td>
<td>Evaluation is a co-operative venture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher control.</td>
<td>Encourages pupil participation and regulation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culpan (1989)

Figure A

Reflection requires mental work and while initially the tendency is to reflect retrospectively on an experience in a one-on-one or small group context, sooner or later it must be done alone. Horwood (1989) suggests that somehow facilitators "must find ways to combine adequate conditions of privacy for reflection within the social interaction of community in which the fruits of discovered connections are expressed".
Because experiential learning is an active process that "includes doing and thinking about what you do" Papert (1988) facilitators need to help students discover and construct new ideas and learn from their personal experience.

This requires facilitators to not only provide the time, but also the actual process of reflection and the strategies to implement it. At this point it is therefore important to acknowledge the students third key point that they highlighted in developing the contract, the guidance role of the tutors.

**Guided reflection as process for learning.**

To help the students develop specific competencies or achieve their specific goals for the year the tutors had to sit down and ask them. The author, along with an Education Lecturer Rex Johnston, adapted and developed an interactive framework based on the original work of John Cowan (1988) Fig 16 from the Open University in Scotland.

*Figure 16*
The adapted version depicted in Fig 17 Law and Johnstone (1991) outlines in a very abstract way, the interactive framework that the tutors took initially to help the students reflect and think about their experiences and subsequent feedback.

As Cowan (1988) points out in his original model "the model is, of course considerably over-simplified. There is no reason to restrict the number of introspective loops to one, or the number of surges of experiential learning to two. However, whatever the number of intermediate introspective loops, it is still important to appreciate that the learner moves in the further experiential learning sequence from a stage in which the experiencing is predominantly exploratory to a stage in which the experiencing should be a consolidation".

He goes on to describe the relationship between the curves and loops. "Now consider the upper curve, on which facilitation ("helping the learner to learn") is represented. Notice that there are two entirely different roles for the facilitator. Sometimes (s)he is distanced from the participants; this happens while they are engaged in further experiential learning. (S)he will have provided structure, and possibly some inputs; or (s)he may be acting as a resource, or may be providing resources while the experiential learning takes place. In each case facilitator and participants are engaged in separate activities, and are separated in that respect. In contrast, during the periods of reflection, there is a close contact between facilitator and learners, which will often require to be on a person-to-person basis". Cowan (1988).
The facilitators role in the reflection process depicted in Fig 17 is a purely guidance role, assisting the individual through the initial thinking process by establishing and clarifying concepts from past or present experiences. This is followed by helping the individual structure his or her thoughts based on supportive evidence. At this point the teacher must be careful not to take over, but encourage the learner to highlight key aspects and predict or explore possible directions. The final role for the teacher is to provide the learner with the opportunity to test or experiment with their ideas.

The author and co-tutor often combined the model described in Fig 17 with a model of Gary and Cowan (1986) that explored individual needs see Fig 19. Again this model was expanded and developed slightly from an original model see Fig 18.

The new expanded model Fig 19 was used for two purposes.

1. To help students to identify the different levels of development of competencies/needs throughout the programme.

2. To assist the facilitators/tutors to identify what sort of activities to provide at different levels of the model for individuals.
Reflection in Action

Facilitators role is to encourage

Thinking process

Structured thought

Highlight key aspects

Opportunities for students to achieve specific tasks

Establishing experiential background
- clarifying specific concepts, this is, this is not
- exploratory activities that relate to these concepts

Explanatory activities
- they are a challenge on the basis of... and can be supported by evidence

Through structuring key questions which emerge from the exploratory activities, what are the key aspects that need to be highlighted

Planning strategies for achieving goals

Pupils/Clients role

Reflect on past experience

Start to structure experiences that are relevant

Identifying key aspects for development

Goal setting

Acknowleging past experiences

Exploring

Consolidating

Future Experiences

Adapted from Cowan (1988); Law/Johnson 1991

Fig. 17
Fig. 18

Committed

Decided

Expressed → Objectives

Committed

Unconcerned

Unformulated

Feelings, understandings, knowledge, thinking

Expressed - aims - Objectives - goals

Confidence in determining the specific needs. Identifying these as single competencies

Not yet expressed but decisions are being contemplated

Commitment to try ideas

Tested and established as part of a teaching style

Tested in a situation in which feedback is given

Continual reassessment

Oblivious

Unperceived

Challenge through experience

Exploring techniques and methods that help students come to terms with the general areas that need work

55

Concerned but can't quite identify what is needed

(A adapted from Garry & Cowan 1986)

Barry Law 1990
As Cowan (1988) states "a facilitator who wishes to deal with needs in an appropriate way must seek different types of activity, depending on the state in which the needs are held by the majority of participants in a group. Expressed needs call for an immediate response, in the form of a brief activity which enables the participants to state their needs in the form of objectives. Felt needs, in contrast, will not be expressed (and so cannot be translated into objectives) unless and until the facilitator creates conditions of safety within which the participants feel secure in declaring the needs concerned.

A different strategy altogether is called for in the case of unformulated needs, for the participants would be unable to specify these, however secure the conditions. What is required here is an activity wherein the participants can explore this particular area, tease out possibilities, consider suggestions, or even identify with a need which another member of the group has been able to specify and express.

Finally, where the needs are unperceived, no progress can be made until the prospective learner recognises the existence of the need concerned. The facilitator must therefore seek some form of challenge through which the learner will be prompted, or helped to discern, that this need is personally relevant and important."

This model also became a tool for helping individuals identify specific skills that needed developing in based on feedback from associates while on teaching practice. Students in consultation with tutors and associates would request specific experiences to either highlight needs or practice developing new strategies.
An important point worth mentioning is that the role of the facilitator does require a person to have;

- a knowledge of the subject matter;
- a familiarity with the resources and an understanding of skill progression;
- the ability to be supportive but encourage learners to self help and be able to monitor their own progress;
- the ability to help individual learners acknowledge experiences, organise them for meaningful interpretation and orchestrate them to provoke critical thinking.

It is the selection of experiences and the orchestration or these to provoke thinking that becomes the critical connection in reflection.

An important point to remember and one which also supports the need for an effective facilitator is that in provoking critical thinking individuals may be working from different known information, therefore working though a completely different pattern of structured thought.

This prompted the author to develop a process for individuals to work through by themselves to help them develop their own needs. In 1992 the author developed and trialled a reflection in action sheet see Fig 20 to help students become more self-directed themselves once they had reached the level of being able to express their own aims and objectives on a specific competency.
The aim was to help students develop their own specific competencies based on feedback, reflection, strategies for future directions and checking on their specific actions. How this reflection in action process was used is illustrated in Fig 21. This model was based on Burnards (1988) model discussed earlier in chapter 1. After the check on performance and the identification of a refined competency another sheet could be used and the process repeated. This allowed for reruns and acknowledged Heron (1989) concept of experiential learning.

I'm not aware of any other professional studies groups using any of the specific processes as described in Fig 16-21 in the context of experiential learning.
Reflection in Action

Action

Check on performance

Feedback process

Based on practical experiences and feedback

Define competencies that need action

Strategies for direction

Consultation with tutor and/or associates

The thinking and developing of an action plan

Reflection

Indicate your own thoughts, comments and feelings

Law/Dunmill 1992
**Reflection in Action**

**Action**
1. Started first question as soon they were seated. Howls of protest but they got ready quickly.
2. Students started work almost immediately, talking stopped.
3. Students seemed to enjoy doing questions.
4. Set the scene for whole lesson.
5. Let me know where to start into lesson.

**Define competencies that need action**
- Settling class down at start of lesson.
- More effort need to keep up good starters for each lesson.

**Strategies for direction**
1. Give questions verbally.
2. Repeat each question only once.
3. Low threshold of participation.
4. Make questions interesting.
5. Only allow 10 mins for starter.
6. Use some questions to revise.
7. Test assumed knowledge for lesson to follow.
8. Use to introduce lesson.
9. Check answers and explain quickly.
10. Random recording of results/keep them on their toes.

**Reflection**
I have tried using ten questions written on O.P. as a starter.
- Students did not settle down to work.
- Talked to each other after I have asked them to stop talking.
- Some did not bother doing problems.
- I spent too much time on starter at expense of lesson.

Class still not settled well.
The final process tool was a mechanism to provide student empowerment by moving towards a student centred environment in terms of decision-making. This process related to who made the decisions in the professional studies group and it was felt that this clearly should involve both tutors and students. There was an initial concerned about the need for a transition period at the beginning of the year due to students previous experiences of the traditional teacher-directed system, as described earlier in the chapter, and it was decided that we should be moving through Heron’s (1989) decision modes as a process for achieving the above aim. In doing this the student acknowledged the facilitators position and power within the group and within the context of the College of Education. This needed to be clearly highlighted because of the constraints of operating an experiential learning programme within a traditional tertiary institution. The problems associated with this are discussed in chapter 5.

The author and co-tutor didn’t adapt or modify any models for this final process tool and as mentioned above put forward Heron’s (1989) 'seven ways of using decision modes in planning' see Fig 13, Chapter 1. With each major decision we put it to the group how they thought it should best be decided. While this framework becomes the mechanism for providing empowerment in the decision making process, it only operated effectively because of all the other key process tools were in place and were linked together by a mutually agreed contract. By themselves they were just tools for learning but together they provided a powerful experiential learning process that helped students, ‘make that exhilarating but unfamiliar jump to self-determination’. Warren (1988).
Chapter 3

Method

The focus of this study was to examine the relationship between experiential education and students experiences in teacher education using this approach.

In order to gain information about students experiences a written survey was given to the 25 students in the authors professional studies group who were involved in an experiential model of teacher education during 1993.

An interview was also conducted with the authors co-tutor for 1993 and his co-tutor, during 1991-92 to gain their perspective on this particular model of teacher education. The interview questions were the same as those given to the students in the written survey.

The survey questions were developed to reflect the objective on which this thesis is based:

- to examine what characterises the experiential learning approach for teacher education and explore how this differs from mainstream teaching and learning.

Two students in the authors tutor group were initially asked to pilot the draft survey. They gave feedback on the clarity, general understanding of terminology, the sequence of the draft questions and survey instructions. Based on their responses the author made a number of changes to both the questions and the survey instructions.
These were further refined after discussions with the authors current co-tutor and thesis supervisors.

The final survey form is attached (Appendix A)

The authors tutor group were initially informed at the beginning of the year that a study of the experiential model of teacher education that they were currently engaged in was to be conducted throughout 1993.

They were approached at the beginning of term 2 1993 and asked if they would participate in a survey to determine their views and understandings of the experiential model.

Having agreed to complete the survey the students and author then negotiated a time late in term two to administer the survey.

Students were asked to fill the questionnaire out as individuals and if they needed clarification of any of the questions they could check with the author who was present during the completion of the survey. All the surveys were handed in before students left the room. The students were not given any detailed readings on experiential education prior to this survey being given out. This was done in order to gauge how students felt themselves about their experience of the process rather than reading up current literature and then regurgitating material they felt the author wanted to hear. Both tutors were also approached earlier in 1993 and asked if this would be prepared to participate in a 2 hour interview on their thoughts and experience of the experiential process of teaching and learning. Both tutors agreed to this and their interviews were conducted during the second week of October.
Of the 25 students in the authors professional studies group only 22 turned up on the day of the survey. The three students that were absent were both sick and unable to attend. The date chosen for the administration of the survey was two days before second section. Unfortunately neither of the two students returned to college before they went on section and did not complete the survey on their return in term three. Only 22 surveys were completed an 88% return.

The author collated the survey responses under each of the 10 question headings. The results and discussion of each of these are detailed in the following chapter.
Chapter 4

Results and Discussion

This chapter places the experience of students involved in the authors professional studies programme within the context of experiential learning and attempts to articulate these experiences in terms of the perspectives described in earlier chapters.

The objective of this report was to examine what characteristises the experiential learning approach for teacher education and explore how this differs from mainstream teaching and learning.

The results of this report indicate that students are able to identify what characterises experiential learning and determine how it differs from mainstream traditional approaches. They have also indicated the advantages and limitations in using this approach within the current education system. It is interesting to note while reading the student responses there is a charge in their responses from questions 1-6 to questions 7-9.

The general tone of response in questions 1-6 is positive and clearly indicates a clear understanding of the key process that make the authors programme essentially experiential. This tone changes slightly when responding to question 7-9 which examines the limitations, changes required to the current system and the difficulties and problems students may have in using this process.
Students support the use of experiential learning as a teaching and learning process which many of them indicating how beneficial it was for them. However while they show commitment at this level they show slight hesitation in their commitment to applying this process in schools.

Their hesitation reflects the barriers they face in using an approach that is radically different from that which is currently offered in schools. This is not a reflection on the great job many teachers are doing in schools under the present system but a problem with the very nature of the historical and traditional system of learning that teachers have endorsed over many years.
Survey results and discussion

The results of the survey questionnaire issued to the authors tutor group on 15 July 1993 are outlined in this chapter. Their views and thoughts are either summarised in part or expressed as written statements under the 9 stated survey questions outlined below.

Both co-tutors who have worked with the author at different times since 1990 have been interviewed to determine their views on this experiential education model. The interview questions were the same as those given to the students in the survey questionnaire. The results of those interviews are also included under each of the stated survey questions.

Students and Co-tutors understanding of the term Experiential Education.

While several students described experiential education as a 'hands on' experience that involved learning by doing the majority of students indicated that for them it involved pro-active participation in a learning process. This was often amplified with statements that described the learning process as one that included:

- shared responsibility for content and delivery

- student established rules and boundaries for learning

- using prior knowledge and experiences in establishing goals and objectives

- student ownership of the learning process
• lecturers operating as facilitators of learning

• practical involvement from each individual learner.

The following is a sample of some of the written statements from students:

• The means by which those who are engaged in learning share responsibility for course content and delivery, and those 'responsible' for teaching perform a facilitatory rather than authoritative function. It is process orientated.

• The student as opposed to the teacher is most prominent in the learning process.

• Students discover for themselves and take ownership of the learning process.

• Learning by drawing on your own experience which is supported by feedback.

In describing their understanding of the term 'experiential education' the students have developed similar views to those who have written on this subject. Students have not attempted to define Experiential Education but they have described what they have experienced. Burnard (1988) in the introductory chapter of this report described experiential knowledge as learning which is gained through direct and personal encounter with subject, person or thing. The students involved in this programme have described their understanding only in terms of key practical processes. It is important to note that the students where not given any of the readings used in this thesis as a
course requirement and that their comments are based on their own practical experience.

The author and co-tutor deliberately left the theory aspects of Experiential Education till later in the programme and began the year by examining students experiences. Instead of using the theory to build an understanding and knowledge of experiential learning it was developed gradually by practical experience. Each class became a learning experience.

This practical aspect is clearly acknowledged by the students when describing their understanding of the term Experiential Education.

Both co-tutors have also indicated that experiential learning was a process for learning and its distinctive feature was the holistic student centred approach to reflection, action, further reflection, review and goal setting. All these aspects of experiential education have been alluded to in both chapter 1 and 2 of this report.

**Key elements of Experiential Education**

Students tended to list key elements as they came to mind and a summary of these are outlined below. These are not listed in any order of priority and the author has not attempted to redefine or prioritise them.

- student set individual goals
- challenge by choice
- establishing a group contract for learning
• tutor taking the role of a facilitator of learning

• onus for learning is placed on the student

• an open forum for discussion

• prior learning is used and built on

• students have a major say in what they are learning

• self and peer assessment

• pupil-centred learning environment

• safe environment - its okay to make mistakes

• reflection in action

• group work

Both the co-tutors indicated the same or similar statements and didn’t identify any further elements to add to this list. The list highlights both the role of the tutor and the students. It acknowledges self and peer assessment, reflection is action and the shared role in the power relationship which where all key aspects of the authors experiential programme outlined in chapter 2.

The list also identifies some of the key principles that Jenning (1990) outlined (chapter 1 pg 20) as being the basis for Elliott Wiggingtons 'Foxfire' approach. As Knapp (1992) has identified "readers familiar
with experiential learning will recognise these principles as belonging to this approach to learning".

The concept of "challenge by choice" which has been identified by students as a key element has not been mentioned in either chapter 1 or 2 and does need some further elaboration. The concept is based on the premise that individuals participate only at the level in which they feel most comfortable. A reluctant person is never pushed or forced to extend themselves beyond their limitations. Smolowe (1990) states that "there is a fine line between strongly encouraging an individual to move beyond their own self-imposed boundaries and pushing an individual beyond their own actual limitations".

Therefore offering a safe learning environment is a key factor in assisting students to reach a comfortable level of participation. For students to have a say in how they learn they must also have a high level of choice and control over what they learn.

**Key factors for implementing an Experiential Learning Process**

There was a consistency in students responses to this particular question and this list has been prioritised based on those.

- tutor commitment and modelling the key elements of this process

- clear student-centred goals and objectives as opposed to teacher centred or curriculum centred ones.

- a safe and supportive learning environment both emotional and physically (contract)
• tutors prepared to share the power in the decision making process

• a well defined feedback system

• a sound philosophy on learning

The two co-tutors while perceiving some similar factors also saw a number of different ones. Those in common with the students were:

• shifting the power base from the tutor to a more cooperative student centred model

• a defined feedback model

• tutors modelling the process of experiential education

• a group contract as a basis for working together (one co-tutor only)

The different factors included:

• having time to reflect and record learning experiences

• learning journals and reflection in action strategies to identify and improve performance

• support and commitment from colleagues (co-tutors) involved in the process and also from other staff and associate teachers in schools who are working with students involved in this experiential education programme.
The responses to questions 1-3 from both the students and co-tutors is consistent with the theory behind the authors experiential programme and serves to highlight the degree to which this particular approach to teacher education has been based on a number of key principles. It also highlights the relevance of combining practice with theory. The Theory of experiential education has emerged during the year with practice and it's interesting to note that both students and the co-tutors have emphasised modelling the process as an important aspect of this programme.

Offering a student-centred approach in which learning relates to student needs seems a natural approach to education and in this case it has been identified as a key factor in implementing experiential education (The students seemed keen to stress this point).. In clarifying this at a later date students indicated that they had stressed this particular aspect of experiential education because their own experience of education, up until their involvement in this programme, had been teacher and curriculum centred. They highlighted the fact that student-centred learning was based on their own concrete experiences and this had more meaning and relevance to them in a learning situation.

Providing a safe learning environment was also identified as a key factor in an Experiential Education model, especially for implementing the learning process. Students indicated that Experiential learning involves taking risks, especially when receiving feedback based on practical performance, and a safe and supportive environment was important for each individual's emotional safety. The contract was identified as being the most significant factor in providing a safe learning environment. The philosophy behind having a contract was discussed earlier in chapter 2. Sharing the power, while a key element of experiential education became a matter of course as students began
to identify their own needs and make decisions about how they could be best met. There were however some limitations to the power sharing role that were beyond both the students and tutors capabilities to resolve and they are discussed further on in this chapter under limitations to this particular Experiential Education model. The process of power sharing was based on Heron's (1989) description of the decision making process as discussed in chapter 2 pg 36. There were also limitations in using his model and these are also discussed later in this chapter.

Point 5, the feedback model, was perceived by the students to be one of the most important practical strategies for implementing experiential education, and adhering to the model (fig 17 chapter 2) was seen as critical in giving constructive feedback on performance. One comment that summed up the general feeling from the students was "it gave you accurate feedback that highlighted strengths and improvements". Students were keen to know the truth on how they performed, rather than have meaningless comments that evaded dealing with critical issues.

Point 6 related to a sound philosophy on learning that was espoused throughout the programme and students indicated that it came from an amalgam of all of the above factors through modelling and practicing experiential learning techniques in a constructive way.

Both the tutors generally concur with the students on the above points. The following discussion only serves to highlight the different factors that they identified.

Both tutors identified the need to have extra time to plan, implement and follow up the experiential process. The indicated that experiential
learning takes a lot of time, can't be rushed and is important if the learning is to be meaningful and based on reflection. This key point was supported by Bert Horwood (1989) earlier in chapter 2, when he acknowledged that "reflection does take time and there is no fast food in the reflection deli." Having the time to achieve this became a real issue for tutors. This point is discussed again later in this chapter in reference to the limitations in using this model in a traditional teacher training institution.

Strategies for recording learning and developing teaching competencies based on feedback were also identified as key factors in implementing the experiential process. The co-tutors both acknowledged that the development of learning journals and reflection in action sheets (pg chapter 2) achieved this. Support and commitment from colleagues and associate teachers in schools was mentioned by both co-tutors as a critical factor in implementing an experiential process. If colleagues and associate teachers are not committed to using the same experiential processes involved in this programme then it becomes difficult for students to make the most of this method of learning. Further discussion on this is included under question 7 on the limitations of this model.

The Role of the Teacher/Facilitator/Tutor in an Experiential Education Programme

In answering this question there was again a general uninformity in the responses given by the students.

Within the context of some quite detailed statements the students used a number of adjectives to describe this role and generally referred to the position as that of the facilitator.
An edited selection of students response are outlined below.

The facilitator needs to be:

- open and approachable
- a guide
- a lead learner
- supportive
- enthusiastic about learning
- reliable, consistent and objective
- interested in the students and their learning needs
- directive when required
- non-threatening
- prepared to be a learner and to share in the decision making process
- able to help students achieve goals
- able to set up experiences so that students can discover for themselves, take more of a backseat role
- able to share ideas and give feedback on student performance
• able to provide a network of support

• able to empower the students to take responsibility for their own learning. It’s a backseat role in many ways it's handing over responsibility to the students for their own learning. The facilitator must keep check on the pace and amount of learning and validity of work.

An interesting and quite frequent response from the students was in relation to the tutors position of power. While on one hand they valued the prospect of student empowerment they didn't want either tutor to abdicate responsibility for the experiential process and felt most comfortable with the cooperative approach to learning.

This reinforces a point made earlier in chapter 2 under the role of the tutor where Heron (1989) outlines his three modes of how teachers should operate and emphasises the point that the key issue is to what extent each political mode should be used and when to use it.

Guidance through effective facilitation was the most popular response. To use a metaphor it's like teaching someone to drive car, with one hand on the steering wheel, and the other just poised to pull on the brake in case of a crisis or until they have the confidence to drive the car by themselves.

A number of adjectives were used by the students to describe the tutor/facilitator role and they are all positive attributes that one would expect most teachers to have. Similar responses were recorded by Horwood and Gibbs (1989) when they reviewed the Open Mountain High School programme which is outlined in more detail in chapter
one. The common factor between these two programmes is the experiential learning process.

In comparison Elliott Wigginton's earlier teaching experiences outlined in chapter 1 of this report reflected a completely different description of students perception of the teachers role. The difference is the traditional style of teaching that they experienced verses the experiential models used at the Christchurch College of Education and the Open Mountain High School. Following his earlier experience Wigginton developed his own experiential approach to teaching called the 'Foxfire approach' (outlined in chapter 1 of this report). He found over time that students attitudes to teachers changed and that they now reflected similar views to those in the Open Mountain High School and Christchurch College of Education Models. The common factor again was the experiential learning process that all three programmes now had in common.

Students generally in all these programmes had respect for teachers, enjoyed learning and felt that they were actually valued members of the learning equation. The teacher/tutor role was now a facilitative one where learning was a cooperative venture and required skill in negotiation, sharing, confronting, processing, collaborating and encouraging self-directed practice.

The two co-tutors reflected similar views to those of the student on their own role as facilitators.

Specifically they identified that they needed to be:

- supportive and recognise that individuals were taking risks when they were engaged in feedback and respect confidentiality.
• able to confront issues and inappropriate behaviour where individuals attempt to manipulate the contract. (one tutor only)

• able to assist people to formulate appropriate goals for themselves.

• able to give quality feedback both in a positive and constructive way.

• able to guide students to the issues but not necessarily through them. Allow for self directed learning.

• able to model experiential processes and take risks and expose yourself; you have to be part of the process and not separate from it.

Similar language emerges when describing the role of the facilitator from both the perspective of the students and the co-tutors. The words guide, supportive, achieving goals, self directed learning, giving feedback and confronting specific issues are common to both groups.

There is common agreement on the tutor/facilitator role and it is generally regarded in a very positive light.

The role of the learner in the experiential process.

The role of the learner in experiential learning requires a commitment to eventually becoming self-directed and taking ownership of the learning process. As Warren (1988) was quoted in chapter 1, "the student-defined curriculum promotes a shift from giving an education to, in the words of Adrienne Rich, 'claiming an education'." In the authors programme students must accept a greater responsibility for their own learning and what they take away from it. The responses
from the students generally reinforce this point. Below is a summary of
their views on the role of the learner.

The role requires:

• a shared commitment to the learning process

• a willingness to participate in all aspects of the experiential process

• individuals to have a say in their own learning

• individuals to take responsibility for dealing with changes in their
  own behaviour and their own learning.

• individuals to take risks in front of their peers

• individuals to learn from and accept constructive feedback

• individuals to recognise that they are accountable for their own
  performance, reflection, development and assessment.

• individuals to become actively involved in their own learning. You
  can't just sit back and absorb what the tutors are saying

• a commitment to a safe learning environment in which learners
  encourage and support each other in achieving specific goals and
  objectives.

• individuals to identify their previous experiences
• individuals to be able to assess what they do well and what they need to improve upon.

• individuals to be non-sexist, non-racist, and sensitive to other people's opinions

• learners need to take an active role in their learning rather than a passive one.

The students have emphasised a strong commitment toward a pro-active learner centered process. They have acknowledged ownership and responsibility for their learning and reinforced the fact that their personal commitment to Experiential Education learning is 'affective' in nature. The affective side of learning is that which influences an individuals feelings and emotions. A large number of students made references to a safe learning environment, students taking personal risks, equity issues, confronting personal behaviour and giving and accepting constructive feedback. It could be concluded that these effect the feelings and emotions of individuals.

The author views experiential education in a holistic context; one that involves the whole person. Heron (1989) describes the whole person "as a spiritual thinking, feeling, choosing, energetically and physically embodied being". Learning in all its forms cannot divorce the person from the process. In the author's view many traditional classrooms that are content and teacher centred often de-personalise learning to the point that students can't see any personal relevance.

For learning to be meaningful it must be seen as relevant, as Chapman (1992) was quoted earlier in the introduction to this report, it has individuals "trusting and feeling as well as thinking".
Teachers in training need to develop strategies to be able to provide an environment for pupils that recognises this and has them learning how to learn as well as giving content knowledge and understanding.

The students in their responses above have identified and supported an active learner role and one in which the learner involves and immerses themselves totally in the process of learning.

The two co-tutors while not identifying everything that the students perceived, have outlined similar functions for the role of the learner. There is a similarity in their individual responses. One co-tutor however has stressed the importance of students acting as "independent thinkers" and having a "clear view of the pace at which they're learning". Both these points highlight key elements of the learners role in experiential learning namely that:

- all work must flow from student desire and concerns and;

- students must take the time to reflect upon experiences in order to establish achievable goals and objectives.

These two points were key principles of Wiggintons 'Foxfire' approach. The learners role is central to the success of experiential learning and if it wasn't for the commitment of students to this learning process then it would collapse under the pressure of more conservative styles of teacher training. From talking with other educators many view this method as a rather radical approach to teacher training. Students involved in this programme have backed this up by making statements like, 'other people can't believe that we are contributing to, rather than receiving an eduction'. The indictment on education in this statement is that the norm is perceived as
someone receiving an education which indicates a passive process rather than an active and contributing one.

**Ways in which Experiential learning could be used in the classroom.**

In true experiential fashion students have responded to this question based only on the ways in which they've been able to implement experiential learning while on teaching section. In doing this they have tended to list examples of activities and subjects.

Further clarification of why this occurred highlighted a major issue for students trying to use this approach as a learning process while on section. Students responses indicate that they tended to modify and adapt aspects of experiential learning to suit the traditional delivery of the curriculum content. This happened due to the limitation often placed on them by associate teachers who expected them to teach in a particular way. Reasons for this were; - the amount of content to get through during a year ie. exam prescribed; - that pupils expect you to give them a certain amount of information; - that group work doesn't work with these pupils and; - that time doesn't allow for this type of approach.

The following is an indication of how students used experiential learning in the classroom for specific activities.

- roleplays
- mock interviews
- experiments
- running demonstrations/seminar presentations
- research projects

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1 Section - Teaching practicum in schools that ranges between 4 and 5 weeks. Students have three teaching sections during their one year of teacher training.
• group work
• assessment (self and peer)
• classroom decision making/problem solving
• brainstorming

The following is a list of subjects where students indicated that they have tried using experiential learning.

• Social Studies
• History
• English
• Economics
• Physical Education
• Outdoor Education

A number of students indicated that they felt experiential learning could be used in virtually all subjects and across all learning situations, but until they had their own class felt is was difficult to establish. They also mentioned that trying to implement experiential learning during a 4-5 week section was difficult because you're in someone else's class who has already established a certain style of delivery.

One of the co-tutors however was quite straight forward in his approach to ways in which experiential learning could be used, "You are either doing it or your not, its a style of operating". The message clearly indicates that it reflects your philosophy on learning and your style of facilitation; - it therefore must be the basis from which you operate or a contradiction sets in. This point will be elaborated on further in the next section on limitations to experiential education.
The other co-tutor tended to see specific aspects of the experiential process as useful but didn't indicate to what extent she viewed it as a style or approach to learning in the classroom.

**Limitation of implementing experiential learning in the classroom.**

It became apparent after reading the students responses to this particular question that the process of experiential education runs counter to many traditional structures within school and tertiary institutions. It was clearly established in the authors survey that these traditional factors were the major limitation to implementing experiential learning strategies. Personal confidence in being able to set-up the experiential learning process successfully was also seen as a possible limiting factor.

The limiting factors have therefore been categorised into two areas; firstly the traditional structures and secondly personal limitations.

Below is an edited list of responses made by students.

**Traditional Structures**

- exam prescribed syllabus.

- the time is not available to develop and teach the processes of experiential leaning.

- teacher directed delivery techniques and the pressure from teachers for students in training to teach the same way.
• classroom learning environments that are threatening i.e., desks in rows, teachers up front, lack of commitment from staff and pupils in providing a safe learning environment that considers an individuals emotional and physical safety.

• timetable difficulties and inbuilt inflexibility in the school system.

• hierarchical nature of the school system.

• attitudes to learning of some principals, BOT, senior staff and parents in allowing students to have a greater role in making decisions about their own learning.

• lack of pupil consultations about how they learn.

• changing the attitudes of pupils from passive participants to pro-active learners. Pupils are traditionally used to receiving an education. Reluctance on the part of students to take responsibility.

• lack of time in one year of teacher training to develop all the skills needed to implement experiential learning and the lack of support in schools to assist first and second year teachers using this process.

• age and maturity of the pupils and their ability to deal with the processes involved in experiential learning.

The students perceived the traditional education systems structures as the greatest limitation for using experiential education. It seems that little has changed in the day to day running or delivery of a highly compartmentalised curriculum in the face of major reforms to education. The students in particular emphasised the teacher-centred
approaches to content delivery, threatening learning environments, organisational structures and a lack of consultation and focus on learner needs as major limitations.

The teacher-centred approach to content delivery is characterised by teachers/tutors making most of the decisions on what students/pupils learn and how they learn it. It reflects the belief that "relevant knowledge is determined by the experts" Gerstein Kahne and Westheimer (1992). Heron's (1989) hierarchical political mode on page 46 of this report clearly outlines this style of operating. It also indicates limited movement by teachers/tutors towards promoting pedagogical techniques which engage students in making decisions about their learning. The focus for schooling in particular is still common goals for all in all learning situations.

This approach with its emphasis on the cognitive aspect of learning also ignores the potential contribution of the affective side of education. The students described threatening learning environments as lacking an affective component. Students specifically indicated that desks in rows, teachers upfront, and a lack of commitment from both staff and pupils in providing a safe and supportive learning environment that protected an individuals emotional and physical safety as a major limiting factors. Experiential education involves taking risks and becoming an active participant; this is difficult in an environment that is not student/pupil-centred.

School organisation structures are also traditionally hierarchical and includes such things as timetables, form levels by age, and structured 1 hr periods. These also limit to what extent an experiential education process can be implemented. The authors own programme within the Christchurch College of Education has been greatly effected by these
factors. One of the co-tutors likened these structures to a 'gate keeping' function on new ideas and innovation within education. He indicated that these formal structures actually limit the development of new approaches to teaching and learning. He also stated that management thrives on things to manage and therefore perpetuates itself; the result of this being, a lack of support for innovation that reduces the traditional hierarchical structures of things to organise and manage. The other co-tutor indicated that the new modular systems for organising and delivering curriculum content was also a limiting factor. She was particularly concerned about placing content knowledge into large chunks for ease of delivery and suggested that this served the needs of the provider rather than that of the learner. Generally modular or block approaches to content delivery tend to be finite and don't normally have the flexibility to specifically meet learner needs, nor provide opportunities for student input. Heron (1989) in particular has argued for a more holistic approach to adult learning that focuses on a cooperative approach to what and how individuals learn.

The students in the author's experiential programme could certainly identify with Heron's notion of a need for a more cooperative approach to learning. While on teaching section in schools they perceived a lack of opportunity for pupils to have any input into what or how they learnt. They were concerned that in general schools and teachers weren't interested in the mixed ability needs of individuals. They also felt that because of curriculum content driven approaches there wasn't any opportunity for teachers effectively to address the mixed ability needs of learners even if they wanted to.

Both co-tutors also mention the lack of consultation and focus on learner needs in schools as major limitations in using experiential education as teaching/learning process.
Personal limitations

The factors mentioned in the previous discussion have all impacted to some degree on the student teachers involved in the author's programme. In some cases this has given rise to personal doubts about how effective this approach might be and to how they might appear to other teachers. The personal limitations identified by the student teachers are listed below;

- My own lack of confidence in using this approach without support;

- Acquiring the appropriate facilitation skills to be successful;

- Dealing with the pressures to conform to traditions methods;

- Taking the risk of being different and possibly isolated.

These limitations are all genuine concerns and reflect two basic issues. The first is the lack of support for new approaches to teaching and learning.

For beginning teachers it's hard enough starting out in a new job without have to face the possibility of being seen as completely different from everyone else.

The second is the limited amount of time (1 yr) available for secondary teacher training and the lack of follow-up in year one and two in support of that initial training.

Developing effective facilitation skills takes time and practice; on going feedback and evaluation of performance is required to fully develop
these skills to a reasonable high level. Without continued support and follow-up students indicated that the pressure to conform to more traditional approaches may become the only option if they were to survive in teaching; a sad indictment on innovation in teacher education. One of the co-tutors concurred with this view but also pointed out that as a tutor he must continue to provide alternatives and challenge traditional approaches to teaching and learning to ensure that we educate pre-service teachers rather than just train them. To train them would be to follow traditional approaches and model only what is current practice. As an educator he believes that his obligation is to model innovation and change in teacher education in the long term belief that this will eventually effect how pupil learning is facilitated.

**Changes that need to be made in current education practices to implement experiential education.**

After reading the survey responses to this question the students identified three general areas that required quite radical changes. Some of these have already been mentioned in previous discussions in this chapter. Students indicated that changes needed to be made to:

- the physical learning environment;

- organisational and management systems; and

- teaching styles.

Specific responses to these three areas are outlined under each of the headings mentioned above.
The physical learning environment

- layout of classroom needs to change, get rid of the desks in rows, this is not conducive to interactive learning,

- organise a more relaxed and open seating plan so everyone is able to see one another,

- shift the teacher from the front of the room,

- develop a more dynamic interactive environment.

80% of student responses suggested a change in classroom layout and the need for a more open and relaxed atmosphere. The traditional classroom environment is often a static and non-interactive one which tends to foster a passive response to learning and schooling. In America a number of experiential educators are suggesting that traditional learning environments alienate a large number of learners and they have recommended that "educators adopt strategies which personalise the school setting and foster stronger school communities". Westheimer, Kahne and Gerstein (1992). In support of this statement the students, when reflecting on their own professional involvement in experiential education during 1993, commented on the importance of a positive, open and community based approach to establishing an effective learning environment.
Organisational and management systems

Many of the responses re-emphasise key points that were outlined as major limitations to the implementation of experiential education. Below is a selected indication of how some of the students responded.

- allocate more time for reflection/feedback on what pupils have learnt in class

- change the hierarchical structure and nature of schools

- have more flexibility in syllabus and teaching methods

- more open and flexible timetables

- school hierarchy; pupils have no power to effect change. If pupils are given more say in their education then they would take more responsibility for their learning

- learning contracts established instead of undefined expectations/guidelines for behaviour.

- a need to lose exam prescriptions

- a change in formal assessment procedures

- re-development of the curriculum in some areas to involve more interactive learning.

The students undoubtedly want to see changes made that provide for a more open and flexible structure in school organisation and
management that accommodates the diverse needs of pupils. There is a lack of collaboration in general between pupils, teachers and educational managers in how schools should be run and managed. Given the current state of school management reforms, little has changed in terms of the day to day structures of timetables, syllabus, assessment, and general classrooms management and control. Faced with reduced budgets school reformers are still advocating a traditional model of curriculum delivery with fewer electives and an organisational structure that restricts new approaches to teaching and learning.

Teaching styles

The area which prompted the most detailed response from students was that of teaching styles. The indicated that traditional pedagogical techniques were not fostering a learner-centred approach. Teachers still tended to stand upfront and deliver content in isolation from other subjects and general life skills.

In particular the student indicated that teachers:

- should not stand up the front and fill the pupils with knowledge, the pupils should be actively involved in their own learning

- should be trained in experiential education facilitation

- need to accept pupils/students as having something to contribute to the class learning environment; - student/pupils need to sit down with teachers and discuss the student/pupil/teacher role.
• need to move away from the traditional teaching style where the teacher is a body of knowledge and the student is a 'blank cheque' so that students develop the skills to become more accountable for their own learning.

• need to change from a largely teacher orientated approach to one where the focus shifts onto valuing the experiences and contributions of pupils.

• teaching in a very directive way provides no forum for open discussion, no avenue for individuals to express their personal experience freely and doesn't accommodate different learning styles.

In following up a number of responses to this question the students highlighted an interesting contradiction in education reforms. While school and in particular teachers, advocated a more learner centred curriculum the reality in their view was completely the opposite. While traditional organisational and management structures can be blamed for some of this contradiction, undoubtedly how teachers perform their role is of major concern.

They perceived teachers to be reluctant to; share power, discuss the pupils/teachers role, make use of learners prior experiences, provide an environment in which learners can interact on an open and free way, accept different learning styles and design new curriculum and teaching techniques that demonstrate their sensitivity to meeting learner needs.

The most urgent question students kept asking both tutors was, "who is our education system for?" The answer of course is for everyone, but
in particular young children and adolescence ranging from 5 through to adulthood; yet nowhere along that continuum are they consulted about how, what or where they learn. In most cases schools, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Universities and private education provides determine how, what the where individuals learn. This could explain why there is lack of motivation from some learners in the education system who perceive achieving academic goals determined by others as irrelevant and meaningless.

The two interviews with the co-tutors confirmed all the key points mentioned under each of the three sub headings above. In particular both co-tutors mentioned the need for teachers to make a quite radical shift in thinking about how they teach.

One co-tutor indicated that "teachers would have to give up a lot of the power that they currently have. A lot of teacher time is currently spent policing power structures".

What difficulties/problems do you have in using experiential education as a process for teaching and learning.

Despite the limitations for implementation experiential education and making changes to typical learning environments there are also personal and social barriers for some students that to some extent effect their ability to use this as a process for teaching and learning.

The difficulties and problems identified by the students concerns focus on two specific issues.
These issues relate to their ability to break out of the traditional mould of teaching and learning that they have been accustomed to and their own ability to use the process effectively after only one year of teacher education.

A sample of student responses are listed below.

- Experiential Education may not be seen by parents as an inappropriate way of teaching.

- Breaking out of the traditional mould and having it accepted as a viable method of teaching.

- I don't feel I know enough to be effective.

- You need great flexibility and excellent facilitative skills, I need more experience in this area so I could debrief learning effectively.

- I feel the transition from traditional learning process to experiential education would be slow and take time to establish.

There is a sense of stability in using historical and traditional practice, and because of this it is hard to bring about change. Historical and traditional practice is used as an argument when referring to mainstream education without reference to research that supports alternative processes or methodologies. The dilemma facing young beginning teachers who use innovative approaches is very real and may engender conflict with those who prefer historical and traditional methods.
A number of students indicated that while they thoroughly enjoyed learning using and experiential process they also found it hard to changes being a product themselves of a traditional system.

Warren (1988) highlights this point in her research at Hampshire College in Massachusetts. Her programme is referred to in chapter 1 of this report. She states that "the lesson I took from that early exposure to a student directed classrooms was that students who are products of a traditionally teacher directed system need some assistance in making that exhilarating but unfamiliar jump to self determination". The author would agree with this and suggest that an initial structure is required to ease individuals from traditional practice to a more learner-centred approach to bring about gradual change. This same process of bringing about gradual change could be used to educate both parents and fellow educators. The structure used by the author is clearly set out in chapter 2 of this report. The need for gradual change requires time and only so much can be achieved within one year teacher training. Students often referred to the lack of time to practice the skills required to facilitate experiential learning during 1 year of teacher training.

While many New Zealand teacher educators believe that teacher training doesn't end when students leave a College of Education a conflict arises when innovation from within the Colleges of Education is not supported in schools. The problem is not all the teachers responsibility either because they are limited by the same traditional and historical practices that face beginning teachers.

Current changes to school education while drastically effecting school administration and curriculum content have not brought about a change in teaching styles. Until this issue is addressed little will change in the day to day delivery of factual content in schools.
While one of the co-tutor identified the same difficulties and problems as the students the other reflected specific issues that arose for him in assisting the authors to develop this process at the Christchurch College of Education.

He identified confronting inappropriate behaviour and dealing with specific issues within the context of experiential education as sometimes emotional, rushed and often exhausting. Time to deal with these in an appropriate way was identified as the major difficulty and one which led to them becoming a problem in the first place. Experiential Education is not an easily package product, nor is teacher education. There is no right way to train teachers just as there is no right way to learn.

Experiential Educators and teachers are like "artists using a palette of tools and abilities that are ever expanding and changing" Proudman (1992).

The problem with education reformers at present is they believe education is a packaged product that can be delivered to everyone in a similar context equally. The problems and difficulties that arise in using Experiential Education techniques as a teaching and learning process are mainly due to the historical and traditional structures that are currently in place and the failure of reformers to address teaching and learning styles. This failure has led to a re-packaging of the old system that still has all the limiting constraints to effect change in how, where and what individuals learn.
The student and tutors were asked to make any further comments about experiential education that they felt they wanted to make and in a general statement at the end of the survey.

A brief summary of these comments are listed below.

- Very exiting way to learn.
- It has it's place in the learning environment. Experiential education makes teaching enjoyable because it helps learners process positively.
- It is a good and effective system but you need a lot of experience to use it.
- Really keen to give it ago, it has been the most enjoyable way to learn a lot of content I've experienced.
- I believe it is a very progressive way of teaching that encourages and validates pupils thereby increasing self esteem.
- Very worthwhile as it is easier to group concepts if you experienced it. Being able to identify things you need to improve upon means you don't waste time going over things you already know.
- God created experiential education, you can read the book of Exodus as one big experiential education exercise for the Israelites. Very effective.
- It is much more enjoyable then being talked at, I find I retain much more after having to "do" something.
- I think the experiential mode is very valuable and should be used where ever possible. I think it is really important that students be involved in accountable for their eduction.
- The benefits far outweigh the traditional drawbacks.
- It is not a panacea - its not something that works for everyone.
- Very empowering process that works for most students.
• Reinforces the partnership in education between the teacher and the learner, it's an active process and this is much healthier than a passive process based on a delivery of content.

A number of students didn't fill this question out commenting that they didn't have anything else to add. Those that did have generally supported experiential education some even going as far as saying it was the most worthwhile and valuable learning they had experienced.

The students have reflected positively about their experience, not one negative comment was written. It again supports the research of Wigginton (1989) and Horwood and Gibbons (1989) in their findings on experiential education mentioned in chapter one. For education to be positive it must be meaningful and this is clearly supported in the students responses.

The comments in general don't highlight anything new that has not already been mentioned in previous chapters. They tend to reinforce what has already been said and are an expression and overall impression of the process they have experienced to date.
Chapter 5
Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine what characterises the experiential learning approach for teacher education and explore how this differs from mainstream teaching and learning.

In conducting this study a number of relevant issues about teaching and learning have arisen which highlight the need for further change within the education system and structures currently in place in New Zealand.

In concluding this study a brief summary will highlight some of the issues facing experiential educators and also outline the key principles of this process of teaching and learning. This will be followed by a number of recommendations for education reformers based on the authors view of the current education system.

John Dewey (1938) statement which begins the introduction to this thesis called the notion of experiential education redundant. This was based on his view of education and how people learn. He asserted that all learning was experiential.

Where then has teaching and learning gone wrong? Why is there a marked difference between the students experience of the traditional education system and experiential education techniques?
One conclusion that can be drawn from the responses of students and tutors involved in the experiential education process at the Christchurch College of Education is the lack of flexibility in the conservative organisation and administration of the education system and the failure of reformers to address how people learn. The education system has one catch - all structure that is supposed to suit all learning styles. It is also based on the "belief that relevant knowledge is determined by experts" Westhimer, Kahne and Gerst (1992).

It is clear from the previous chapter that the students and tutor support the concepts and processes of experiential education. However the immediate prospect of students using this in schools is somewhat limited given some of the limitations outlined in the previous chapter. A lack of support and the conservatism of the traditional organisational structures of schools are the major concerns of young teachers in attempting an experiential approach.

Given the current state of government policy towards education and the delivery of the new curriculum as package units of learning with pre-determined learning outcomes it becomes difficult to introduce courses of work that specifically meet students individual needs. Yet meeting students needs is high on the agenda of the new curriculum reforms, a contradiction that is noted by the author and one that could be explored by further study at a later date.

The issue in relation to this contradiction is based on the notion of who decides what learners needs are, the individual or so - called experts. The author believes that many reformers assume the role of
knowing what's best for learners based on their pre-conceived ideas of what's best for the economy and society. A possible reason for this is that reformers believe they are meeting individuals needs because that's what they think individuals need in order to take their place in society.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the literature and the students resources is that Experiential Education does endeavour to meet learners needs and accommodate different learning styles. In stating this however, it is important to mention that there is no right way of teaching and learning and not everyone is comfortable with the process involved in this methodology and it would be remiss of the author not to indicate this. Experiential Education as this report has already indicated is process based, active and is based on a set of working principles. Experiential Education involves the learner taking risks and exploring different options and there is no set recipe for success. It can also be concluded that there are common threads that have emerged from the literature, the authors programme and the students responses that highlight these working principles and these are summarised below. The basis for these principles comes from Proudman (1992).

Experiential education involves:

- Student engaged in purposeful and meaningful learning; Wiggington (1986)
• A holistic view of learning for life; Heron (1989)
• Accommodating for different learning needs; Kolb (1976)
  Proudman (1992)
• A safe physical and emotional environment; Heron 1989
  Proudman (1992)
• The re-examination of values; Proudman 1992 James in Page
  (1987)
• The presence of meaningful relationships (learner to self, learner
  to teacher, and learner to the learning environment); Proudman
• Extending an individual learning comfort zone by challenge by

Based on these principles and on the feedback from students and tutors
a number of recommendations have been put forward by the author as
a result of this study.

**Recommendations**

1. That education reformers consult with pupils/students when
   planning changes to education and involve them in the decision
   making process on content and delivery.

2. That teacher, tutors, lecturers, leaders adopt a more facilitative
   approach/style to teaching. This means encouraging self-directed
   and student centred learning. (Teaching should not be viewed
   "as imparting and doing things to pupils/students. Heron 1989).
3. That teachers/facilitators adopt a system for self and peer assessment that encourages self reflection and goal setting in the learning situation.

4. That teachers/facilitators examine the use of learning contracts that defines the purpose of learning, examines the roles of the teacher/facilitator and learner and provide a mechanism for self monitoring and breeches of the learning contract. (This process would ensure a safe physical and emotional learning environment for learners.)

5. That future curriculum content provides a basic core only and allows time for student-directed study that is meaningful, has a purpose and is planned in a cooperative way between the teacher/facilitator and individual students.

6. That Teacher Education insituations in cooperative with schools provide a support network for all year one and two teachers and especially those who are using new innovative teaching techniques to promote change and growth in how individual learners can best "claim an education". Adrienne Rich in Warren (1988).

It is imperative that education reformers and Colleges of Education address the need for more learner-centred approaches to teaching and learning. Learning should be enjoyable, meaningful and delivered in an environment which is challenging, allows for risk taking and above all provides a safe structure for these things to happen. The students involved in this study are testament to the process of experimental education and to their commitment in providing a more learner-centred approach to education. They face a number of obstacles that are centred on traditional and historical practice that will take time and
energy to slowly change. However, on reflecting on Wiggingtons experience, that of Horwood and Gibbons and the authors professional studies group during 1993 there is light at the end of the tunnel. The potential benefits of pupils and students responding in such a positive way about their own learning are enormous.

The time is right for Colleges of Education to live up to their name as institutions of Education and provide leadership and direction in this area rather than follow current tradition and practice and remain as purely training institutions. Education is a collaborative process and the decisions that are made in relation to teaching and learning should involve a cooperative approach between teachers and learners.
Appendix A

Thesis Questionnaire
The following set of questions have been established to determine your views and thoughts on Experiential Education.

1. How do you understand the term Experiential Education?

2. In your view what are the key elements of Experiential Education?

3. What would you regard as the key factors in implementing an experiential learning process in your classroom?

4. How would you view the role of the teacher/facilitator/tutor in an Experiential Education programme?

5. What is your view on the role of the learner in the experiential learning process?

6. List some of the ways you could use experiential learning in the classroom?

7. Identify the limitations of implementing your ideas in the classroom?

8. Think of the typical learning environment pupils face today and list some of the changes you think would need to be made to implement experiential education?

9. What difficulties/problems do you have with using experiential education as a process for teaching and learning?

10. Other comments you wish to make about experiential education.


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