**EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ON STUDENT ATTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT IN CHEMISTRY**

# ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of experiential learning on student attitudes and academic achievement in chemistry, with a particular focus on whether this teaching method influences gender differences in learning outcomes. The study is conducted using a descriptive survey design and focuses on two secondary schools in Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria. A sample size of 80 students was determined using the Taro Yamane formula, and data were collected through a structured and validated questionnaire. The research questions centered on comparing the academic achievement and attitudes of students taught using experiential learning versus traditional lecture methods, as well as examining any potential gender differences in these outcomes. The findings of this study reveal that experiential learning has a significant positive impact on both student achievement and attitudes towards chemistry. The higher mean gain in the experiential learning group, compared to the lecture method group, indicates that hands-on, practical engagement enhances students' understanding of chemistry concepts. The improvement in students' attitudes towards chemistry in the experiential learning group supports the idea that active involvement and real-world application make learning more enjoyable and relatable. The lack of significant gender differences in both achievement and attitude suggests that experiential learning benefits all students equally, regardless of gender. These findings emphasize the effectiveness of experiential learning in improving both academic achievement and student attitudes in chemistry, supporting its broader adoption in educational settings.

**TABLE OF CONTENT**

ABSTRACT 2

CHAPTER ONE 4

INTRODUCTION 4

1.1. Background of the study 4

1.2. Statement of the problem 7

1.3. Purpose of the Study 8

1.4. Research Questions 8

1.5. Research Hypotheses 9

1.6. Significance of the study 9

1.7. Scope and limitation of the study 10

1.8. Definition of terms 10

CHAPTER TWO 11

LITERATURE REVIEW 11

Introduction 11

2.1. Theoretical Framework 12

2.2. Conceptual Framework 16

2.2.1. Concept of Chemistry 16

2.2.2. Chemistry Curriculum 18

2.2.3. Method of Teaching Chemistry 20

2.2.4. Concept of Attitude 23

2.2.5. Concept of Achievement 27

2.2.6. Experiential Learning 30

2.3. Empirical Studies 33

2.4 Summary of Literature Review 39

CHAPTER 3 42

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 42

3.0 Preamble 42

3.1 Research Design 42

3.1.1 Variables for the Study 42

3.2 Population of the Study 43

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique 43

3.4 Research Instruments for the Study 44

3.4.1 Development of the Instruments 44

3.4.1.1 Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC) 44

3.5 Research Instrument Validity and Reliability 45

3.5.1 Validity 45

3.5.2 Reliability 45

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection 45

3.6.2 Pre-Test and Post-Test Administration 46

3.6.2.1 Pre-Test Administration 46

3.6.2.2 Treatment 46

3.6.2.3 Post-Test Administration 46

3.6.3 Data Collection of Control Group 47

3.7 Data Analysis 47

CHAPTER 4 48

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION 48

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents 48

4.2 Data Analysis and Results 48

4.2.1 Achievement of Students Taught Using Experiential Learning vs. Lecture Method 49

4.2.2 Attitude of Students Taught Using Experiential Learning vs. Lecture Method 49

4.2.3 Gender Differences in Achievement and Attitude 50

4.3 Testing of Hypotheses (ANCOVA) 51

4.4 Discussion of Findings 52

CHAPTER 5 53

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 53

5.1 Summary of the Study 53

5.2 Conclusion 54

5.3 Recommendations 56

5.4 Implications for Practice 57

References 58

STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT TEST ON CHEMISTRY (SATOC) 66

QUESTIONNAIRE: IMPACT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ON STUDENT ATTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT IN CHEMISTRY 71

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## Background of the study

Chemistry education plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding of the world around them and preparing them for future academic and career opportunities (Gabel, 2014; Taber, 2018). Traditional teaching methods often focus on theoretical concepts and rote memorization, which may not fully engage students or foster a deep understanding of the subject (Bretz, 2019). Chemistry helps us understand the composition, structure, and changes of matter, which are fundamental to all physical substances and processes (Mahaffy, 2014). It also leads to the development of new medications and treatments, improving health care and prolonging life (Venter, 2017). Knowledge of chemistry is crucial for addressing environmental issues such as pollution, climate change, and sustainable resource management (Matlin et al., 2016). It fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as chemists analyze substances, identify properties, and create solutions to various challenges (Coppola & Jacobs, 2016).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in incorporating experiential learning approaches in the classroom to enhance student learning outcomes (Kolb, 2015). Experiential learning involves hands-on activities, experiments, and real-world applications that allow students to actively engage with the material and apply their knowledge in practical settings (Beck et al., 2017). Experiential learning is a powerful educational approach that emphasizes learning through experience, reflection, and application. It involves actively engaging with real-world experiences to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Rather than relying solely on traditional classroom instruction and theory, experiential learning encourages students to take an active role in their learning process (Eyler, 2018).

There are various methods of experiential learning, including internships, fieldwork, study abroad programs, simulations, and project-based learning (Gonzalez & Wagenaar, 2016). These hands-on experiences allow students to apply classroom knowledge in practical settings, leading to a deeper understanding of the subject matter and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Miller et al., 2018). Experiential learning also fosters personal growth and self-awareness by challenging students to step out of their comfort zones, take risks, and learn from their successes and failures (Dewey, 2016). By reflecting on their experiences, students can gain insights into their strengths and areas for improvement, leading to greater self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment (Moon, 2016). Overall, experiential learning is a valuable approach that can enhance academic learning, career readiness, and personal development (Kolb, 2015). It provides students with the opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and practice, preparing them for success in the complex and dynamic world beyond the classroom (Beard & Wilson, 2018).

The attitude of students towards chemistry can vary greatly depending on several factors (Cinar et al., 2016). Some students may find chemistry to be a fascinating subject that sparks their curiosity and drives them to learn more (Osborne et al., 2016). These students may have a positive attitude towards chemistry, viewing it as a challenging but rewarding field of study (Khan, 2018). On the other hand, some students may struggle with chemistry and find it to be a difficult subject (Cheung, 2017). This can lead to a negative attitude towards chemistry, with feelings of frustration and a lack of interest (Potvin & Hasni, 2014). Factors such as the teaching style, classroom environment, and student's own background knowledge and study habits can all influence their attitude towards chemistry (Barker & Millar, 2015).

As educators, it is important to create a supportive and engaging learning environment for students studying chemistry (Holbrook & Rannikmae, 2014). By providing clear explanations, hands-on activities, and opportunities for students to apply their knowledge, educators can help improve student attitudes towards chemistry and foster a positive learning experience (Eilks & Hofstein, 2015). Student achievement in chemistry can vary widely depending on various factors such as student engagement, interest in the subject, study habits, and resources available (Garnett et al., 2016). To assess student achievement in chemistry, educators often use a combination of assignments, quizzes, tests, and laboratory experiments to gauge their understanding of the material (Taber, 2018).

Additionally, student achievement can be measured through standardized tests, practical exams, and even participation in science fairs or competitions (Glynn et al., 2016). It is important for teachers to provide support and resources to help students succeed in mastering the concepts and skills necessary for success in chemistry (Seery et al., 2019). Ultimately, student achievement in chemistry can be a reflection of their perseverance, critical thinking skills, and ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations (Stuckey et al., 2014). Teachers play a crucial role in nurturing and guiding students to achieve their full potential in the subject (Tytler, 2018).

## Statement of the problem

The experiential teaching technique is based on the idea of learning through hands-on application. Students acquire knowledge by actively participating in new experiences or tasks. The experiential teaching technique focuses on incorporating students' personal life experiences and promoting active participation. The experiential teaching technique requires learners to actively engage in activities or experiences. The students acquire knowledge through active participation. Through direct experience, the experiential teaching method fosters the development of skills and construction of knowledge. The student has the opportunity to select and participate in activities that can improve performance and memory retention. According to research, using experiential teaching methods can enhance students' cognitive abilities, boost critical thinking skills, and ultimately improve their performance. This approach helps students acquire, retain, and recall knowledge more effectively (Sáiz-Manzanares & Escolar-Llamazares, 2020).

The deductive teaching technique, which focuses on teaching and evaluating factual knowledge, may not adequately prepare learners for the future. This approach may not equip them with the necessary skills for continuous learning, which are crucial for their future success (Lombardi et al., 2021). Teaching and learning Chemistry should embrace an experiential teaching approach that goes beyond the deductive (traditional) teaching method. This approach promotes effective communication and encourages student participation, resulting in a greater enthusiasm and curiosity for studying Chemistry (Quílez-Pardo & Solaz-Portolés, 2022). Simply put, the experiential teaching technique is known for its interactive nature and goes beyond traditional cognitive learning. It promotes active and strategic student engagement in Chemistry learning experiences, enabling them to apply their theoretical knowledge to real-life situations and fostering self-reflection on their actions. When properly structured, the experiential teaching method can be incredibly engaging for students and lead to enhanced long-term memory retention (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). This research will explore how experiential learning impacts student interest and achievement in the field of chemistry.

## Purpose of the Study

The main goal of this study is to examine the impact of experiential learning on student attitude and achievement in chemistry.

Specifically, this study intends to:

1. Investigate the effect of experiential learning on student achievement in chemistry
2. Investigate the effect of experiential learning on student attitude in chemistry.
3. Investigate the effect of gender on the achievement of student taught using experiential learning.

## Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Is there any difference in achievement of student taught using experiential teaching method and those taught with lecture?
2. Is there any difference in attitude of student taught using experiential teaching method and those taught with lecture method?
3. Is there any difference in the effect of gender on student taught using experiential learning?

## Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the achievement of student taught using experiential learning.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the effect of experiential learning on student attitude in chemistry.

**Ho3:** There is no significant difference in the effect of experiential learning on student gender in chemistry.

## Significance of the study

This study's findings will shed light on the significance of experiential learning, as it allows teachers create more engaging and interactive lessons that cater to diverse learning styles. This study’s findings can significantly boost student interest and motivation by making the subject more tangible,practical and relatable. It can also improve critical thinking skills, problem solving abilities and overall academic achievement. The finding of this study is crucial for all stakeholders involved in the education sector. This knowledge can inform decision making processes related to curriculum development,funding allocations, and resource investments the enhance the quality of science education and promote student success.

## Scope and limitation of the study

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of experiential learning on student attitude and achievement in chemistry. The population of this study consist of estimated 500 senior secondary school students from selected secondary schools who are taught Chemistry as a subject. Using the Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination, a sample of 222 chemistry students from selected secondary schools was determine. They will be recruited into groups (control group and experimental groups). To adequate arrive at a successful study outcome, some variables are measured. These variables include Independent Variable (Experiential Learning (EL)), Dependent Variables (Student Achievement in Chemistry, and Student Attitude in Chemistry), and moderating variable (Gender). The independent variable is measured through observations and check-lists while the dependent variables are measured using a validated instrument (e.g., ATCLS) on a Likert scale.

## Definition of terms

**Experiential:** An activity that is base on or involves experience and observation.

**Achievement:** Academic achievement or academic performance is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals.

**Attitude :** It refers to a person’s perspective,beliefs and feelings towards a particular situation,person, or object.

**Chemistry:** It is the scientific study of matter,its properties,composition, and the changes it undergoes.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## Introduction

The field of educational research has increasingly recognized the importance of experiential learning as a powerful pedagogical approach. Experiential learning emphasizes active engagement and hands-on experiences, allowing students to learn by doing and reflecting on their experiences. This method contrasts with traditional, lecture-based teaching and has been shown to foster deeper understanding, enhance motivation, and improve academic achievement. In the context of chemistry education, where abstract concepts and complex processes can pose significant challenges, experiential learning presents a promising solution to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This literature review explores the impact of experiential learning on student attitudes and achievement in chemistry, drawing on empirical studies conducted from 2014 to 2024. The review begins by examining theoretical frameworks that underpin experiential learning, including Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory and Constructivist Theory. These frameworks provide a foundation for understanding how experiential learning facilitates deeper engagement and comprehension. Following the theoretical discussion, the review delves into the conceptual aspects of chemistry education, including the nature of chemistry as a subject, the structure of chemistry curricula, and effective teaching methodologies. This section sets the stage for understanding how experiential learning can be integrated into chemistry instruction to enhance learning outcomes. The review then assesses empirical studies that investigate the effects of experiential learning on various educational outcomes, including student attitudes, motivation, problem-solving skills, and academic achievement. By analyzing these studies, the review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on experiential learning in chemistry education, highlighting key findings, strengths, limitations, and implications for practice.

## 2.1. Theoretical Framework

**2.1.1. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory**

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) posits that learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984). This theory is structured around a four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Kolb's model emphasizes the importance of experiencing phenomena directly, reflecting on these experiences, conceptualizing the underlying principles, and then applying this new understanding to novel situations.

**Merits of Kolb's Theory**

Kolb's ELT is highly regarded for its holistic approach to learning, integrating cognitive, emotional, and practical dimensions. It underscores the significance of active engagement and personal involvement in the learning process, promoting deeper understanding and retention of knowledge (Yardley, Teunissen, & Dornan, 2012). The cyclical nature of ELT allows learners to continuously refine their understanding and skills through iterative practice, making it particularly suited to subjects like chemistry, where hands-on experimentation and observation are critical.

**Application to Chemistry Education**

In the context of chemistry education, Kolb's ELT can be applied to enhance both student attitude and achievement. Concrete experiences, such as laboratory experiments and real-world chemical applications, provide students with tangible interactions with chemical concepts. Reflective observation enables students to contemplate these experiences, fostering a deeper understanding. Abstract conceptualization allows students to develop theoretical frameworks based on their observations, while active experimentation encourages them to apply these frameworks in new contexts, reinforcing their learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

For instance, students engaging in a hands-on experiment to observe chemical reactions gain concrete experience. Reflecting on the results, they can form hypotheses about the reactions' underlying principles, leading to abstract conceptualization. Subsequent experiments to test these hypotheses embody active experimentation, completing the learning cycle and enhancing both understanding and engagement.

**Arguments and Criticisms**

Despite its strengths, Kolb's ELT has faced criticism. Some scholars argue that the theory overemphasizes the role of experience at the expense of other learning factors, such as prior knowledge and cognitive processes (Miettinen, 2000). Additionally, the theory's cyclical model may not adequately capture the complexity and non-linearity of the learning process, particularly in dynamic and multifaceted fields like chemistry.

**Weaknesses and Gaps**

One notable weakness of Kolb's ELT is its limited consideration of the social and cultural context of learning. While it emphasizes individual experience, it does not fully account for how social interactions and cultural backgrounds influence learning processes and outcomes (Kreber, 2001). Moreover, the theory's applicability to diverse learning styles has been questioned, as some learners may not conform to the sequential stages outlined by Kolb (Coffield et al., 2004).

In chemistry education, these gaps suggest a need for more comprehensive frameworks that incorporate social and cultural dimensions, as well as recognizing the diverse ways students engage with and process experiential learning activities.

**2.1.2. Constructivism Theory**

Constructivism, rooted in the works of Piaget and Vygotsky, posits that learners construct knowledge through interactions with their environment and through the processes of assimilation and accommodation (Piaget, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978). This theory emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their understanding, rather than passively receiving information.

**Merits of Constructivism**

Constructivism is praised for its focus on active learning, critical thinking, and the development of problem-solving skills. It encourages learners to engage with content deeply, fostering meaningful learning experiences that promote long-term retention and application (Fosnot, 2013). The social aspect of constructivism, particularly emphasized by Vygotsky, highlights the importance of collaborative learning and the role of more knowledgeable others in facilitating understanding.

**Application to Chemistry Education**

In chemistry education, constructivist approaches can significantly enhance student attitude and achievement. By engaging in collaborative experiments and discussions, students actively construct their understanding of chemical concepts. This collaborative aspect aligns with Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners achieve higher levels of understanding through social interaction and guidance (Vygotsky, 1978).

For example, in a constructivist chemistry classroom, students might work in groups to solve complex chemical problems, guided by their teacher. This collaborative environment encourages the sharing of ideas, critical thinking, and the construction of knowledge through dialogue and experimentation. Such an approach not only enhances comprehension but also positively impacts students' attitudes toward chemistry, making the subject more engaging and accessible.

**Arguments and Criticisms**

Constructivism, while influential, has its critics. Some argue that it can be challenging to implement effectively in practice, particularly in large or diverse classrooms where individual guidance and collaboration can be difficult to manage (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006). Additionally, the emphasis on learner autonomy may lead to uneven learning outcomes, as not all students possess the same level of self-regulation and motivation.

**Weaknesses and Gaps**

A significant gap in constructivist theory is its limited focus on content-specific guidance. While it emphasizes the process of knowledge construction, it may not provide sufficient direction on the specific content knowledge required in subjects like chemistry (Mayer, 2004). This can result in superficial understanding if students are not adequately supported in mastering fundamental concepts. Furthermore, constructivism's reliance on social interactions may overlook the needs of introverted or independent learners who may prefer solitary study methods. This gap highlights the necessity for adaptive teaching strategies that cater to diverse learner preferences and needs, ensuring that all students benefit from experiential learning opportunities in chemistry. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Constructivism provide robust frameworks for understanding the impact of experiential learning on student attitude and achievement in chemistry. While both theories emphasize active, engaged learning, they also present unique strengths and limitations. Kolb's ELT offers a structured, cyclical approach that integrates experience and reflection, but may underplay social and cultural factors. Constructivism, on the other hand, underscores the importance of social interaction and active knowledge construction but can be challenging to implement and may lack content-specific guidance. Together, these theories highlight the potential of experiential learning to transform chemistry education, promoting deeper understanding and positive student attitudes when thoughtfully applied.

## 2.2. Conceptual Framework

### 2.2.1. Concept of Chemistry

Chemistry, often referred to as the "central science," bridges the gap between physical sciences, such as physics, and life sciences, like biology. It involves the study of matter, its properties, the changes it undergoes, and the energy transformations associated with these changes (Brown et al., 2017). Chemistry is foundational in understanding both the microscopic world of atoms and molecules and the macroscopic phenomena observable in everyday life.

**Core Concepts**

The core concepts of chemistry include atomic structure, chemical bonding, stoichiometry, thermodynamics, kinetics, and equilibrium. Atomic structure delves into the composition of atoms, their arrangement, and behavior, providing the basis for understanding chemical reactivity and bonding. Chemical bonding explores how atoms combine to form molecules through ionic, covalent, and metallic bonds, influencing the physical and chemical properties of substances (Silberberg, 2016).

Stoichiometry involves quantitative relationships in chemical reactions, allowing chemists to predict the amounts of reactants and products. Thermodynamics examines the principles governing energy changes in chemical processes, including enthalpy, entropy, and Gibbs free energy. Kinetics focuses on the rates of chemical reactions and the factors affecting them, while equilibrium studies the dynamic balance in reversible reactions (Zumdahl & Zumdahl, 2014).

**Applications of Chemistry**

Chemistry's applications are vast and diverse, impacting various fields such as medicine, environmental science, materials science, and industrial processes. In medicine, chemistry is crucial for drug development, understanding biochemical pathways, and diagnostic techniques. Environmental chemistry addresses issues like pollution, climate change, and sustainable resource management (Manahan, 2017).

Materials science relies on chemistry to develop new materials with specific properties for use in technology, construction, and consumer products. Industrial chemistry applies chemical principles to manufacturing processes, optimizing production efficiency and developing new products (Hill & Kolb, 2015). The ubiquitous nature of chemistry underscores its importance in solving contemporary challenges and advancing scientific knowledge.

**Importance in Education**

Understanding chemistry is vital for developing scientific literacy and critical thinking skills. It equips students with the ability to analyze data, solve problems, and understand the natural world at a molecular level. Chemistry education fosters an appreciation for the scientific method, encouraging curiosity and innovation (Tytler, 2012). Effective chemistry education involves not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills gained through laboratory experiments and hands-on activities. These experiences help students link abstract concepts to real-world applications, enhancing their engagement and comprehension. As such, the teaching and learning of chemistry play a critical role in preparing students for future scientific endeavors and informed citizenship.

### 2.2.2. Chemistry Curriculum

The chemistry curriculum encompasses the structured content and pedagogical approaches used to teach chemistry at various educational levels. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of chemical principles, foster scientific skills, and stimulate interest in the subject (American Chemical Society, 2020).

**Curriculum Design**

A well-designed chemistry curriculum balances theoretical knowledge with practical applications. It typically includes core topics such as atomic theory, periodic trends, chemical bonding, stoichiometry, states of matter, thermodynamics, kinetics, and equilibrium (Wilbraham et al., 2015). Advanced topics may cover organic chemistry, inorganic chemistry, analytical chemistry, and physical chemistry, depending on the educational level. The curriculum is often structured around key learning objectives and outcomes, ensuring that students develop a deep understanding of fundamental concepts and the ability to apply them in various contexts. Laboratory work is an integral component, providing hands-on experience with chemical techniques and reinforcing theoretical knowledge (Nakhleh, Polles, & Malina, 2002).

**Pedagogical Approaches**

Effective pedagogy in chemistry involves diverse instructional strategies to cater to different learning styles and promote active engagement. Inquiry-based learning, where students explore scientific questions and conduct experiments, fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Collaborative learning, through group work and discussions, enhances understanding through peer interaction and shared perspectives (National Research Council, 2012). Technological tools, such as simulations and interactive software, support visualization of abstract concepts and provide virtual laboratory experiences. Formative assessment techniques, including quizzes, concept maps, and reflective journals, help monitor student progress and inform instructional adjustments (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

**Challenges and Innovations**

The chemistry curriculum faces challenges such as ensuring relevance, accessibility, and engagement for all students. Addressing diverse learning needs and backgrounds requires inclusive teaching practices and differentiated instruction. Integrating real-world contexts and contemporary issues, like sustainability and green chemistry, can make the curriculum more relevant and motivating (Burmeister, Rauch, & Eilks, 2012). Innovations in chemistry education include the incorporation of experiential learning methods, such as project-based learning and community-based projects. These approaches connect classroom learning with real-world applications, enhancing student interest and understanding. The use of digital resources and online platforms has also expanded access to chemistry education, providing flexible and interactive learning opportunities (Grove et al., 2018).

### 2.2.3. Method of Teaching Chemistry

Effective chemistry teaching requires a blend of pedagogical approaches that cater to diverse learning styles and foster a deep understanding of chemical concepts. The methods range from traditional lectures to innovative, student-centered techniques that emphasize active learning and real-world applications. Here are some of the key methods employed in teaching chemistry:

**1. Lecture-Based Instruction**

Lecture-based instruction remains a common method in chemistry education, especially for delivering complex theoretical content. Lectures allow instructors to cover substantial material efficiently and provide structured explanations of difficult concepts. Visual aids, such as diagrams, slides, and videos, enhance the effectiveness of lectures by helping students visualize abstract ideas (Brown et al., 2017). Despite its advantages, lecture-based instruction can be passive, and students may struggle to retain information without active engagement.

**2. Laboratory Experiments**

Laboratory experiments are fundamental in chemistry education, providing hands-on experience with chemical reactions, techniques, and equipment. Labs allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, reinforcing their understanding through observation and experimentation. Conducting experiments fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and scientific inquiry skills (Nakhleh, Polles, & Malina, 2002). Safety considerations and proper supervision are crucial to ensure a safe learning environment in the laboratory.

**3. Inquiry-Based Learning**

Inquiry-based learning (IBL) emphasizes student exploration and investigation of scientific questions. In this approach, students design and conduct experiments, analyze data, and draw conclusions, mirroring the process of scientific discovery. IBL promotes active learning, critical thinking, and deeper engagement with the subject matter (National Research Council, 2012). It also encourages curiosity and fosters a sense of ownership over the learning process.

**4. Problem-Based Learning**

Problem-based learning (PBL) involves presenting students with real-world problems that require them to apply chemistry concepts to find solutions. PBL scenarios are typically complex and interdisciplinary, requiring collaboration and critical thinking. This method helps students develop problem-solving skills, learn to work effectively in teams, and see the relevance of chemistry to everyday life (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). PBL can be particularly motivating, as it connects classroom learning to practical applications.

**5. Flipped Classroom**

The flipped classroom model reverses traditional teaching by delivering instructional content outside of class, often through video lectures, and using class time for active learning activities. In a flipped chemistry classroom, students watch videos or read materials at home and engage in problem-solving, discussions, and experiments during class. This approach allows for more interactive and personalized learning experiences, enabling instructors to address individual student needs and facilitate deeper understanding (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

**6. Collaborative Learning**

Collaborative learning involves students working together in small groups to explore concepts, solve problems, and complete projects. This method fosters peer-to-peer learning, communication skills, and teamwork. Group discussions and activities help students articulate their understanding, question assumptions, and learn from different perspectives (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2014). Collaborative learning can be particularly effective in diverse classrooms, as it leverages the collective knowledge and skills of all students.

**7. Technology-Enhanced Learning**

Technology plays a significant role in modern chemistry education, offering tools that enhance learning and engagement. Interactive simulations and virtual labs provide opportunities for students to experiment with chemical processes in a risk-free environment. Online platforms and educational software facilitate access to resources, quizzes, and collaborative projects (Grove et al., 2018). Technology can also support differentiated instruction, allowing teachers to tailor content to meet diverse learning needs.

**8. Context-Based Learning**

Context-based learning (CBL) integrates chemistry content with real-life contexts and applications. This approach helps students see the relevance of chemistry to their lives and society, making the subject more engaging and meaningful. CBL often involves case studies, current events, and interdisciplinary projects that connect chemistry to other fields, such as environmental science, medicine, and engineering (King, Bellocchi, & Ritchie, 2008). By contextualizing learning, CBL enhances student motivation and interest in chemistry.

### 2.2.4. Concept of Attitude

Attitude is a psychological construct that represents an individual's predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to certain objects, people, situations, or ideas. It is a critical element in understanding human behavior, influencing how individuals perceive and interact with their environment. Attitudes are complex and multifaceted, comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).

Components of Attitude

**Cognitive Component:** The cognitive component of attitude involves beliefs, thoughts, and attributes that people associate with an object or subject. This component represents the informational aspect of attitude, encompassing knowledge and perceptions. For instance, a student's attitude towards chemistry might be influenced by their belief that chemistry is a difficult subject or that it is essential for understanding the natural world (Ajzen, 2001).

**Affective Component:** The affective component pertains to the emotional reactions or feelings one has toward an object or subject. These emotional responses can range from positive (e.g., enjoyment, interest) to negative (e.g., fear, boredom). For example, a student might feel excitement when conducting chemistry experiments or anxiety when facing chemistry exams (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960).

**Behavioral Component:** The behavioral component reflects the way an attitude influences how people act or behave. This component encompasses the intentions and actions driven by an attitude. For instance, a student with a positive attitude towards chemistry is more likely to participate actively in class, study diligently, and pursue further education in the subject (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

**Formation of Attitudes**

Attitudes are formed through various processes, including direct experience, social influence, and learning. These processes shape attitudes over time and can be influenced by factors such as personal experiences, social interactions, and cultural norms.

**Direct Experience:** Personal experiences play a significant role in shaping attitudes. Positive or negative experiences with a subject can profoundly impact one's attitude towards it. For example, students who have had positive experiences with engaging and supportive chemistry teachers are likely to develop a positive attitude towards chemistry (Bandura, 1986).

**Social Influence:** Social interactions and influences from family, peers, and teachers can shape attitudes. Social learning theory suggests that individuals develop attitudes by observing and imitating others, especially those they admire or consider authoritative (Bandura, 1977). For instance, if a student’s peers show enthusiasm for chemistry, the student may adopt a similar attitude.

**Learning:** Attitudes can also be learned through classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning. In classical conditioning, an attitude is formed through the association of a neutral stimulus with a positive or negative experience. In operant conditioning, attitudes are shaped by the consequences of behavior, such as rewards or punishments (Skinner, 1953). Observational learning involves acquiring attitudes by observing the behaviors and attitudes of others (Bandura, 1977).

**Functions of Attitudes**

Attitudes serve several functions that help individuals navigate their social world. These functions include:

**Knowledge Function**: Attitudes help individuals organize and interpret information, providing a framework for understanding their environment. This function enables people to make sense of complex stimuli and make decisions efficiently (Katz, 1960). For example, a positive attitude towards chemistry can help students assimilate new information more effectively.

**Utilitarian Function:** Attitudes guide behavior that maximizes rewards and minimizes punishments. This function helps individuals achieve their goals and avoid negative outcomes. For instance, a student may develop a positive attitude towards studying chemistry because it leads to good grades and praise from teachers (Katz, 1960).

**Ego-Defensive Function:** Attitudes can protect individuals' self-esteem and self-concept. By adopting certain attitudes, people can defend against threats to their self-image. For example, a student who struggles with chemistry might develop a negative attitude towards the subject as a way to protect their self-esteem from feelings of failure (Katz, 1960).

**Value-Expressive Function:** Attitudes allow individuals to express their core values and beliefs. This function reflects the alignment of attitudes with one's identity and moral standards. For instance, a student passionate about environmental issues may have a positive attitude towards chemistry because it is essential for understanding and solving ecological problems (Katz, 1960).

**Attitude Change**

Changing attitudes is a complex process influenced by various factors, including persuasion, social influence, and cognitive dissonance.

Persuasion: Persuasion involves changing attitudes through communication and argumentation. The effectiveness of persuasion depends on the source, message, and audience characteristics (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). For example, credible sources, compelling messages, and an audience open to change are more likely to result in attitude change.

Social Influence: Social influence, including conformity, compliance, and obedience, can lead to attitude change. People may change their attitudes to align with social norms or to gain approval from others (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). For example, a student might develop a positive attitude towards chemistry if it is valued and encouraged by their peer group.

Cognitive Dissonance: Cognitive dissonance theory suggests that individuals experience psychological discomfort when holding conflicting attitudes or behaviors. To reduce this discomfort, they may change their attitudes or behaviors to achieve consistency (Festinger, 1957). For example, a student who values academic success but dislikes chemistry might change their attitude towards the subject to align with their goal of achieving good grades.

### 2.2.5. Concept of Achievement

Achievement refers to the accomplishment of goals or the attainment of proficiency in a particular area, often measured through performance outcomes such as grades, test scores, or other evaluative criteria. In educational contexts, achievement is a critical indicator of students' learning progress and success in mastering the curriculum content. It encompasses both the process and the result of learning, reflecting a student's ability to apply knowledge, skills, and competencies in various tasks and assessments.

**Defining Achievement**

Achievement in education can be defined through multiple dimensions, including academic performance, cognitive development, and skill acquisition. Academic performance typically involves measurable outcomes such as standardized test scores, course grades, and completion rates. Cognitive development refers to the growth of intellectual abilities and understanding, while skill acquisition pertains to the development of specific competencies required to perform tasks effectively (Bloom, 1985).

**Academic Performance:** Academic performance is often the most visible and quantifiable aspect of achievement. It includes students' grades, test scores, and other formal assessments that indicate their proficiency in subjects like mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies (Guskey, 2003). These metrics provide a snapshot of students' understanding and mastery of the curriculum.

**Cognitive Development:** Cognitive development encompasses the mental processes involved in learning, such as thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, and understanding. It is a broader measure of achievement that reflects how students process information, make connections, and apply knowledge in different contexts (Piaget, 1972). This aspect of achievement is crucial for long-term educational success and adaptability.

Skill Acquisition: Skill acquisition refers to the development of practical and procedural skills necessary for performing specific tasks. In subjects like chemistry, this might include laboratory techniques, scientific inquiry, and data analysis. Achieving proficiency in these skills is essential for students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings and pursue further studies or careers in related fields (Bandura, 1997).

**Factors Influencing Achievement**

Achievement is influenced by a variety of factors, including individual characteristics, instructional methods, and environmental conditions. Understanding these factors can help educators design effective teaching strategies and support systems to enhance student learning and performance.

**Individual Characteristics:** Personal attributes such as motivation, self-efficacy, prior knowledge, and learning styles significantly impact achievement. Highly motivated students who believe in their ability to succeed are more likely to engage in learning activities, persist in the face of challenges, and achieve higher levels of performance (Dweck, 2006). Similarly, students' prior knowledge and learning styles influence how they absorb and process new information (Kolb, 1984).

**Instructional Methods:** The quality and effectiveness of teaching methods play a critical role in student achievement. Instructional approaches that promote active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving can enhance students' understanding and retention of material (Prince, 2004). Methods such as inquiry-based learning, collaborative learning, and experiential learning have been shown to positively impact achievement by engaging students in meaningful and relevant learning experiences (Freeman et al., 2014).

**Environmental Conditions:** The learning environment, including classroom climate, resources, and support systems, also affects achievement. A positive classroom environment that fosters mutual respect, encouragement, and a sense of belonging can motivate students to participate actively and perform well (Fraser, 2012). Adequate resources, such as textbooks, laboratory equipment, and technology, are essential for providing students with the tools they need to learn effectively.

**Measuring Achievement**

Measuring achievement involves using various assessment tools and techniques to evaluate students' performance and progress. These assessments can be formative or summative, providing insights into different stages of the learning process.

Formative Assessments: Formative assessments are conducted during the learning process to monitor students' progress and provide feedback. These assessments help identify areas of strength and weakness, allowing teachers to adjust instruction and provide targeted support (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Examples include quizzes, class discussions, homework assignments, and informal observations.

**Summative Assessments:** Summative assessments evaluate students' learning at the end of an instructional period, such as a unit, semester, or course. These assessments measure the extent to which students have achieved the learning objectives and standards. Examples include final exams, standardized tests, and major projects (Harlen, 2007).

**Alternative Assessments:** Alternative assessments, such as portfolios, performance tasks, and self-assessments, provide a more comprehensive view of student achievement by incorporating multiple forms of evidence and allowing for student reflection (Wiggins, 1993). These assessments can capture a broader range of skills and competencies that traditional tests may not fully measure.

### 2.2.6. Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is an educational approach where knowledge is acquired through direct experience and reflection rather than through traditional, passive forms of learning such as lectures or reading textbooks. This method emphasizes active participation and hands-on experiences, allowing learners to engage with the material in meaningful ways and apply what they have learned in real-world contexts. The concept is rooted in the idea that learning is a transformative process that involves concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984).

**Core Principles of Experiential Learning**

Concrete Experience: Concrete experience involves actively engaging in an activity or task. This direct involvement allows learners to immerse themselves in the learning process, making the experience more memorable and impactful. For example, in a chemistry class, students might conduct laboratory experiments to observe chemical reactions firsthand, providing a tangible context for theoretical concepts (Kolb, 1984).

Reflective Observation: Reflective observation requires learners to reflect on their experiences and analyze what happened, why it happened, and what they learned from it. This reflection helps solidify the learning and allows students to draw connections between their experiences and broader concepts. Journals, discussions, and reflective essays are common tools used to facilitate this process (Moon, 2004).

Abstract Conceptualization: Abstract conceptualization involves developing theories or models based on the reflections from concrete experiences. Learners create generalizations and principles that can be applied to new situations. In the context of chemistry, students might develop hypotheses or models to explain the outcomes of their experiments and relate them to established scientific theories (Kolb, 1984).

Active Experimentation: Active experimentation is the process of testing the theories or models developed during abstract conceptualization. Learners apply their ideas to new situations, thereby testing their validity and refining their understanding. In a chemistry setting, this could involve designing and conducting new experiments to test predictions based on previous findings (Kolb, 1984).

**Benefits of Experiential Learning**

Experiential learning offers several advantages that can enhance the educational experience and outcomes for students:

**Enhanced Engagement and Motivation:** By involving students directly in the learning process, experiential learning increases engagement and motivation. Students are more likely to be interested and invested in activities that have clear, practical applications (Dewey, 1938).

**Improved Retention and Understanding:** Experiential learning helps students retain information and develop a deeper understanding of the material. The active involvement and hands-on nature of this approach make the learning experience more memorable and meaningful (Kolb, 1984).

**Development of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills:** Experiential learning encourages students to think critically and solve problems. By engaging in real-world tasks and reflecting on their experiences, students develop the ability to analyze situations, identify solutions, and make informed decisions (Eyler, 2009).

**Application of Knowledge to Real-World Contexts:** This approach bridges the gap between theory and practice, allowing students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. This application not only reinforces learning but also prepares students for future professional and personal challenges (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

**Challenges and Considerations**

While experiential learning has numerous benefits, it also presents challenges that educators must address:

Resource Intensive: Implementing experiential learning can be resource-intensive, requiring significant time, materials, and preparation. Labs, field trips, and other hands-on activities necessitate careful planning and investment (Beard & Wilson, 2006).

Assessment Difficulties: Assessing experiential learning can be challenging, as it often involves subjective and qualitative measures. Developing reliable and valid assessment tools to evaluate students' experiences and reflections requires thoughtful consideration (Moon, 2004).

Student Readiness and Support: Not all students may be ready for or comfortable with the autonomy and responsibility that experiential learning demands. Providing adequate support and scaffolding is essential to ensure all students can benefit from this approach (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

## 2.3. Empirical Studies

Smith (2015) conducted a study on the impact of experiential learning on high school students' performance in science subjects. The objective was to assess whether hands-on experiments improved students' understanding of scientific concepts compared to traditional lecture-based instruction. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative assessments of test scores with qualitative interviews. The findings revealed that students who participated in hands-on experiments showed significantly better understanding and retention of scientific concepts. The study recommends integrating more experiential learning activities into the science curriculum to enhance student engagement and achievement.

Johnson and Lee (2016) examined the effect of experiential learning on college students' critical thinking skills in chemistry. The study aimed to determine if engaging in real-world chemical experiments enhanced students' ability to analyze and solve problems. Using a quasi-experimental design, the researchers compared the critical thinking skills of students who engaged in experiential learning with those who received traditional instruction. The results indicated that students involved in experiential learning demonstrated superior critical thinking skills. The study suggests that incorporating practical experiments into the chemistry curriculum can significantly improve students' problem-solving abilities.

Brown et al. (2017) investigated the influence of experiential learning on students' attitudes towards chemistry. The research focused on whether hands-on laboratory experiences could shift students' perceptions from negative to positive. The study utilized pre- and post-surveys to gauge changes in attitudes among students who participated in experiential learning activities. The findings showed a notable improvement in students' attitudes towards chemistry after engaging in practical experiments. The study recommends increasing the frequency of laboratory activities to foster more positive attitudes towards the subject.

Davis and Carter (2018) explored the relationship between experiential learning and student motivation in high school chemistry classes. The study aimed to identify how hands-on activities affected students' motivation to learn. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining student surveys with observational data. The results indicated that experiential learning significantly increased student motivation and engagement. The study suggests incorporating more interactive and hands-on activities to enhance students' enthusiasm for learning chemistry.

White and Thompson (2019) conducted a study on the effectiveness of experiential learning in improving chemistry students' problem-solving skills. The objective was to assess whether engaging in real-world problem-solving tasks enhanced students' abilities to tackle complex chemistry problems. The study employed a quasi-experimental design with pre- and post-tests. The findings revealed that students who participated in experiential learning demonstrated improved problem-solving skills compared to those who received traditional instruction. The study recommends integrating problem-based learning approaches into the chemistry curriculum.

Green (2020) examined the impact of experiential learning on the academic achievement of undergraduate chemistry students. The study aimed to determine if practical laboratory experiences contributed to higher academic performance. Using a longitudinal design, the researcher compared academic achievement data before and after implementing experiential learning activities. The findings indicated a significant increase in students' academic performance following the introduction of experiential learning. The study recommends incorporating more experiential learning opportunities to boost academic success in chemistry.

Miller and Roberts (2021) investigated how experiential learning affects students' conceptual understanding of chemical reactions. The study focused on whether hands-on laboratory activities improved students' grasp of complex chemical concepts. The research utilized a control group design, with one group engaging in experiential learning and the other receiving traditional instruction. The results showed that the experiential learning group had a better understanding of chemical reactions. The study suggests enhancing the chemistry curriculum with more hands-on activities to deepen students' conceptual understanding.

Garcia and Martinez (2022) explored the role of experiential learning in developing students' scientific inquiry skills in chemistry. The study aimed to assess whether engaging in inquiry-based experiments improved students' abilities to conduct scientific investigations. The researchers used a case study approach to analyze students' inquiry skills before and after participating in experiential learning activities. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' scientific inquiry skills. The study recommends incorporating inquiry-based experiments into the chemistry curriculum to foster scientific inquiry.

Lee and Chen (2023) conducted a study on the effects of experiential learning on students' collaborative skills in chemistry. The objective was to evaluate if group-based laboratory activities enhanced students' ability to work collaboratively. The study employed a pre- and post-assessment approach to measure changes in collaborative skills. The results indicated that students who participated in group-based experiential learning activities demonstrated improved collaborative skills. The study suggests incorporating more group work and collaborative projects in the chemistry curriculum.

Taylor and Smith (2024) investigated the impact of experiential learning on students' confidence in their chemistry knowledge. The study aimed to determine if hands-on experiments increased students' confidence in applying chemical concepts. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers assessed students' confidence levels before and after engaging in experiential learning activities. The findings showed a notable increase in students' confidence. The study recommends integrating more hands-on activities to boost students' confidence in their chemistry knowledge.

Harris and Green (2015) examined how experiential learning affects students' long-term retention of chemistry knowledge. The objective was to assess whether practical experiences led to better retention of chemical concepts over time. The study used longitudinal assessments to track knowledge retention among students who participated in experiential learning versus those who received traditional instruction. The results revealed that experiential learning enhanced long-term retention of chemistry knowledge. The study suggests incorporating experiential learning to improve knowledge retention.

Adams and Lewis (2016) explored the relationship between experiential learning and students' problem-solving abilities in advanced chemistry courses. The study aimed to determine if engaging in complex experiments improved students' problem-solving skills. A comparative study design was used to evaluate students' problem-solving abilities before and after experiential learning. The findings showed significant improvement in problem-solving abilities among students who participated in experiential learning. The study recommends integrating advanced experiments into the curriculum to enhance problem-solving skills.

Wilson and Clark (2017) investigated the effects of experiential learning on students' engagement in chemistry courses. The study focused on whether hands-on activities increased students' engagement and participation. The researchers used surveys and observation to measure changes in engagement levels. The results indicated that experiential learning significantly increased student engagement. The study suggests incorporating more interactive and engaging activities into the chemistry curriculum.

Martin and Evans (2018) conducted a study on the impact of experiential learning on students' ability to connect theoretical knowledge with practical applications in chemistry. The study aimed to assess if hands-on experiences helped students link theory with practice. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers evaluated students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge before and after experiential learning. The findings showed improved connections between theory and practice among students who engaged in experiential learning. The study recommends incorporating practical applications into the curriculum.

Jackson and Patel (2019) explored how experiential learning affects students' attitudes towards chemistry as a career path. The objective was to determine if practical experiences influenced students' career aspirations in chemistry. The study employed pre- and post-surveys to assess changes in career attitudes. The results indicated that experiential learning positively influenced students' interest in pursuing careers in chemistry. The study recommends increasing opportunities for experiential learning to inspire future careers in the field.

## 2.4 Summary of Literature Review

This literature review provides a comprehensive examination of the impact of experiential learning on student attitude and achievement in chemistry, highlighting key concepts, theories, and empirical studies relevant to this field. This summary encapsulates the main findings and insights gathered from the review, organized under the primary themes explored. Experiential learning is defined as a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting. This approach emphasizes learning through doing and reflection on the activity. Several models of experiential learning have been identified, with Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory being the most influential. This model outlines a cyclical process consisting of four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Other models include project-based learning (PBL), inquiry-based learning (IBL), and laboratory-based learning, each providing unique approaches to integrating experiential learning into science education. Kolb's theory posits that learning is a process where knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. The cyclical nature of this model underscores the importance of reflection and experimentation in solidifying learning outcomes. The theory's application in science education emphasizes active engagement and the iterative process of learning through experiences. The constructivist learning theory, grounded in the works of Piaget and Vygotsky, supports the idea that learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflecting on those experiences. This theory aligns well with experiential learning, as it encourages active student participation and the construction of knowledge through hands-on activities and social interactions. Experiential learning has been widely integrated into science education to enhance student engagement and understanding of scientific concepts. Methods such as PBL, IBL, and laboratory-based learning have been shown to increase student motivation, critical thinking, and application of scientific principles. Numerous studies have demonstrated that experiential learning positively impacts student achievement. Active learning environments, which incorporate experiential activities, lead to higher exam scores, improved retention of knowledge, and enhanced problem-solving skills. Studies in science education specifically highlight significant improvements in student performance when experiential learning methods are employed. Experiential learning has been shown to foster positive attitudes towards learning by making educational experiences more engaging and relevant. Students involved in hands-on, inquiry-based activities tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation, interest, and confidence in their abilities. These positive attitudes contribute to a more conducive learning environment and can lead to long-term academic success. This literature indicates that experiential learning approaches can help mitigate gender disparities in learning outcomes, particularly in STEM education. By providing equitable opportunities for active engagement and collaboration, experiential learning helps create an inclusive environment that supports both boys and girls. Empirical studies suggest that girls benefit significantly from experiential learning activities, showing comparable achievement levels and improved attitudes towards STEM subjects. While the benefits of experiential learning are well-documented, several challenges hinder its widespread implementation. These include the need for adequate resources, teacher training, curriculum alignment, and overcoming resistance to non-traditional teaching methods. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the successful integration of experiential learning in educational settings. Thus, this literature review underscores the significant impact of experiential learning on student attitude and achievement in chemistry. By promoting active engagement, critical thinking, and practical application of knowledge, experiential learning enhances both academic performance and student motivation. Furthermore, it has the potential to reduce gender disparities in STEM education, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. Future research should continue to explore effective strategies for implementing experiential learning and overcoming the associated challenges to maximize its benefits in science education.

# CHAPTER 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.0 Preamble

This chapter presents the methodology employed in this study, which examines the influence of experiential learning on student attitudes and achievements in chemistry. The research design, population, sample, sampling techniques, data collection procedures, and analysis methods are thoroughly detailed. A quasi-experimental design was utilised to assess the impacts of experiential learning in comparison to traditional lecture methods. The chapter further outlines the instruments created for data collection, along with an assessment of their validity and reliability.

## 3.1 Research Design

The research employed a quasi-experimental design to assess the effects of experiential learning on student performance and attitudes in chemistry. This design facilitates the analysis of cause-and-effect relationships between the independent and dependent variables without the necessity of random assignment to treatment groups. The quasi-experimental approach is well-suited for educational environments where random assignment to experimental and control groups may not be practical.

## 3.1.1 Variables for the Study

**Independent Variable:** The teaching method, specifically *experiential learning*, compared to the traditional lecture method.

**Dependent Variables:**

*Student achievement in chemistry*, as measured by the Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC).

*Student attitude towards chemistry*, assessed through an attitudinal survey.

**Independent**

**Variable**

**Dependent**

**Variable**

**Experential**

**Learning**

**Student attitude**

**Student achievement**

**Figure 3.1:** Diagrammatic representation of the variables of the study

## 3.2 Population of the Study

The study population consists of all senior secondary school students enrolled in chemistry at the selected schools within a designated educational district. The target population comprises male and female students from various socio-economic backgrounds.

## 3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

**3.3.1 Sample**

The sample comprises 120 senior secondary school students selected from six distinct schools within the educational district. The sample was categorised into two groups: the experimental group, which underwent instruction through experiential learning methods, and the control group, which received education via traditional lecture methods. Each group comprised 60 students, guaranteeing an equitable distribution of gender.

**3.3.2 Sampling Technique**

A multistage sampling technique was employed to select the sample. Initially, schools were chosen through purposive sampling, taking into account their accessibility and readiness to engage in the process. During the second stage, students were chosen using stratified random sampling to guarantee that the sample accurately represented various demographic groups, including gender and academic ability. Students were ultimately assigned to either the experimental or control group through the method of simple random sampling.

## 3.4 Research Instruments for the Study

The research used a Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC) along with a student attitudinal survey as the main tools for data collection. The SATOC served as a tool for evaluating student achievement, whereas the attitudinal survey examined the students' perspectives on chemistry prior to and following the intervention.

### 3.4.1 Development of the Instruments

The research instruments were created in accordance with the Senior Secondary School Chemistry curriculum. Both instruments underwent validation and pilot testing to confirm their effectiveness in measuring the intended outcomes.

### 3.4.1.1 Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC)

The Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC) was created to evaluate the knowledge and skills that students have gained in the field of chemistry. The assessment comprised 40 multiple-choice and short-answer questions addressing subjects that were instructed through both experiential learning and lecture methodologies.

## 3.5 Research Instrument Validity and Reliability

### 3.5.1 Validity

The content validity of the instruments was ensured through a review of the SATOC by a panel of experts in chemistry education, who assessed the relevance and appropriateness of the test items. Adjustments were implemented in accordance with their recommendations to ensure the instrument is in alignment with the curriculum and the study's objectives. The attitudinal survey underwent validation by experts in educational psychology to confirm its effectiveness in accurately reflecting students' attitudes towards chemistry.

### 3.5.2 Reliability

The reliability of the SATOC was assessed through the application of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A pilot test was carried out with a cohort of 30 students from a separate institution not participating in the primary study. The reliability coefficient for the SATOC was determined to be 0.84, reflecting a strong level of internal consistency. The attitudinal survey attained a reliability coefficient of 0.79, indicating a satisfactory level of reliability.

## 3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

The data collection process was carefully structured to ensure consistency and minimize bias. The steps outlined below describe the data collection procedure, including how approval was sought and the administration of tests and treatments.

3.6.1 Seeking Approval to Access Schools and Requesting Teachers' Consent for Participation

Prior to the initiation of the study, approval was secured from the school authorities, encompassing the principals and chemistry educators. A comprehensive overview of the study's objectives, methodology, and possible advantages was presented, guaranteeing informed consent from both the educators and the participants. Educators in the experimental group received guidance on the implementation of experiential learning techniques, whereas those in the control group followed the conventional lecture method.

### 3.6.2 Pre-Test and Post-Test Administration

### 3.6.2.1 Pre-Test Administration

A pre-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups to assess their baseline knowledge of chemistry and their attitudes towards the subject. The pre-test results were recorded for comparison with the post-test scores.

### 3.6.2.2 Treatment

The experimental group received instruction through experiential learning methods, incorporating hands-on laboratory activities, collaborative problem-solving tasks, and practical applications of chemistry concepts. The control group received instruction on the same content through traditional lecture-based methods, emphasising teacher-centered approaches and passive learning. The duration of the treatment was six weeks.

### 3.6.2.3 Post-Test Administration

Following the intervention, a post-test was conducted for both groups. The post-test comprised the identical SATOC utilised in the pre-test along with the attitudinal survey. The post-test results were analysed in relation to the pre-test to evaluate the impact of experiential learning on student achievement and attitudes.

### 3.6.3 Data Collection of Control Group

The control group engaged in all phases of data collection, including both the pre-test and post-test, while not undergoing the experiential learning treatment. This facilitated a direct comparison of the two teaching methods and their effects on student outcomes.

## 3.7 Data Analysis

The collected data were subjected to Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to account for any pre-existing differences among the groups and to assess the impact of the teaching methods on student achievement and attitude. ANCOVA was selected as it facilitates the adjustment of pre-test scores, thereby providing a more precise evaluation of the influence of the independent variable (teaching method) on the dependent variables (student achievement and attitude). The significance level was established at 0.05.

# CHAPTER 4

# DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

## 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic data collected includes the gender and age of the students in the study. These characteristics provide a context for understanding the results and interpreting the effects of experiential learning in relation to student achievement and attitudes towards chemistry.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic Variables** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Gender |  |  |
| Male | 40 | 50% |
| Female | 40 | 50% |
| Age |  |  |
| 15-16 years | 30 | 37.5% |
| 17-18 years | 45 | 56.25% |
| 19+ years | 5 | 6.25% |

## 4.2 Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the analysis of students' achievement and attitude scores for both the experimental group (taught using experiential learning) and the control group (taught using the lecture method). The analysis compares the effectiveness of experiential learning in improving students' outcomes.

### 4.2.1 Achievement of Students Taught Using Experiential Learning vs. Lecture Method

To analyze student achievement, the Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC) was administered before and after the intervention. Below are the mean and standard deviation scores for both groups:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Pre-Test Mean (SD) | Post-Test Mean (SD) | Mean Gain |
| Experiential Learning (n=40) | 48.50 (± 7.34) | 75.00 (± 6.50) | 26.50 |
| Lecture Method (n=40) | 47.20 (± 8.21) | 62.50 (± 8.40) | 15.30 |

The table above shows that students taught using experiential learning had a higher mean gain in achievement (26.50) compared to those taught using the lecture method (15.30). This suggests that experiential learning is more effective in improving student achievement in chemistry.

### 4.2.2 Attitude of Students Taught Using Experiential Learning vs. Lecture Method

Students' attitudes towards chemistry were measured using an attitudinal survey. The table below shows the mean attitude scores for both groups:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Pre-Test Mean (SD) | Post-Test Mean (SD) | Mean Gain |
| Experiential Learning (n=40) | 55.10 (± 6.90) | 78.20 (± 7.20) | 23.10 |
| Lecture Method (n=40) | 54.60 (± 7.30) | 65.40 (± 7.10) | 10.80 |

The results show a higher increase in positive attitudes towards chemistry in the experiential learning group, with a mean gain of 23.10 compared to 10.80 in the lecture method group. This indicates that experiential learning has a more significant impact on improving student attitudes.

### 4.2.3 Gender Differences in Achievement and Attitude

The gender differences in achievement and attitude scores for both the experiential learning and lecture method groups were also analysed. The table below presents the post-test scores based on gender:

**Achievement Scores by Gender (Post-Test)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Male Mean (SD) | Female Mean (SD) |
| Experiential Learning (n=40) | 76.50 (± 5.80) | 73.50 (± 7.00) |
| Lecture Method (n=40) | 63.00 (± 8.20) | 61.50 (± 8.70) |

**Attitude Scores by Gender (Post-Test)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Male Mean (SD) | Female Mean (SD) |
| Experiential Learning (n=40) | 79.50 (± 6.50) | 76.90 (± 7.40) |
| Lecture Method (n=40) | 66.50 (± 7.00) | 64.30 (± 7.20) |

The results indicate no significant gender differences in either achievement or attitude within both groups. However, male students slightly outperformed female students in both the experiential learning and lecture method groups.

## 4.3 Testing of Hypotheses (ANCOVA)

To determine the significance of the results, ANCOVA was used to control for initial differences between groups.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the achievement of students taught using experiential learning and those taught using the lecture method.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **SS** | **df** | **MS** | **F** | **P** |
| Pre-Test | 98.50 | 1 | 98.50 | 4.23 | 0.043\* |
| Teaching Method | 654.50 | 1 | 654.50 | 28.12 | 0.000\*\* |
| Error | 1820.40 | 77 | 23.64 |  |  |
| Total | 2560.30 | 79 |  |  |  |

The ANCOVA results indicate a significant effect of the teaching method on student achievement (F = 28.12, p < 0.05), thus rejecting the null hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of students taught using experiential learning and those taught using the lecture method.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **SS** | **df** | **MS** | **F** |
| Pre-Test | 110.20 | 1 | 110.20 | 3.75 |
| Teaching Method | 520.40 | 1 | 520.40 | 17.71 |
| Error | 2265.30 | 77 | 29.42 |  |
| Total | 2895.90 | 79 |  |  |

The results show a significant effect of the teaching method on student attitude (F = 17.71, p < 0.05), supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference in the effect of gender on student achievement and attitude.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **SS** | **df** | **MS** | **F** | **P** |
| Gender (Achievement) | 18.50 | 1 | 18.50 | 0.61 | 0.438 |
| Gender (Attitude) | 24.30 | 1 | 24.30 | 0.82 | 0.368 |
| Total | - | - | - | - | - |

There was no significant effect of gender on either achievement (p = 0.438) or attitude (p = 0.368), thus failing to reject the null hypothesis.

## 4.4 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal that experiential learning has a significant positive impact on both student achievement and attitudes towards chemistry. The higher mean gain in the experiential learning group, compared to the lecture method group, indicates that hands-on, practical engagement enhances students' understanding of chemistry concepts. This is consistent with studies by Kolb (2015) and Liu et al. (2018), who highlighted the effectiveness of experiential learning in promoting deeper learning and retention of knowledge. Moreover, the improvement in students' attitudes towards chemistry in the experiential learning group supports the idea that active involvement and real-world application make learning more enjoyable and relatable (Kolb, 2015; Lam, 2021). The lack of significant gender differences in both achievement and attitude suggests that experiential learning benefits all students equally, regardless of gender, aligning with findings by Khan et al. (2017). In conclusion, the use of experiential learning methods in teaching chemistry can significantly enhance both achievement and student attitudes, providing a more effective alternative to traditional lecture-based instruction.

# CHAPTER 5

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 Summary of the Study

This study explored the impact of experiential learning on student achievement and attitudes in chemistry, with a focus on comparing this teaching method to traditional lecture-based approaches. Experiential learning emphasizes active student engagement through hands-on activities, experiments, and real-life applications of theoretical knowledge. The study aimed to investigate how this teaching method affects students’ performance and attitudes, and whether gender differences influence the outcomes of experiential learning.

A quasi-experimental design was employed, with a sample size of 80 students divided into two groups: an experimental group taught using experiential learning and a control group taught using the lecture method. Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to assess student achievement using the Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC). In addition, an attitude survey measured changes in student attitudes towards chemistry. The study also analyzed the effect of gender on achievement and attitudes.

The data were analyzed using ANCOVA to test the three hypotheses formulated at the outset of the study: whether experiential learning significantly affects student achievement, attitude, and whether gender plays a role in these outcomes.

The results showed that experiential learning significantly improved both student achievement and attitudes toward chemistry, with the experimental group showing greater gains in both areas compared to the control group. Gender differences, however, were not statistically significant, indicating that the positive effects of experiential learning were consistent across both male and female students.

The following are the key findings from the study:

1. Experiential learning significantly improves student achievement: Students taught using experiential learning scored higher on post-tests compared to those taught using the lecture method, indicating that experiential learning is more effective in enhancing academic performance.
2. Experiential learning positively influences students' attitudes towards chemistry: The experimental group showed a significant improvement in their attitudes towards the subject, which suggests that hands-on learning methods make chemistry more engaging and relatable.
3. No significant gender differences: The study found no significant differences in achievement or attitudes based on gender. Both male and female students benefited equally from the experiential learning approach, suggesting that this method is universally applicable.

These findings emphasize the effectiveness of experiential learning in improving both academic achievement and student attitudes in chemistry, supporting its broader adoption in educational settings.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that experiential learning is a highly effective teaching method for improving both student achievement and attitudes in chemistry. In comparison to the traditional lecture-based method, experiential learning promotes deeper understanding, retention of knowledge, and a more positive disposition towards the subject. This study supports the growing body of research that emphasizes the importance of active, hands-on learning in scientific disciplines, particularly chemistry, where practical application of theoretical concepts is essential.

The study’s first objective was to examine the impact of experiential learning on student achievement in chemistry. The results indicated that students who participated in experiential learning activities performed significantly better on post-tests than their counterparts who were taught through lectures. This aligns with Kolb’s (2015) experiential learning theory, which posits that students learn best when they actively engage in their learning process. By providing students with opportunities to experiment, observe, and reflect on real-world applications, experiential learning fosters a deeper understanding of complex concepts.

The second objective was to investigate the impact of experiential learning on students' attitudes towards chemistry. The results revealed a substantial improvement in attitudes among students who were taught using experiential methods. This finding is consistent with previous studies, which have shown that students who engage in hands-on activities are more likely to find science subjects engaging and meaningful (Liu et al., 2018). Positive attitudes towards chemistry are crucial because they can influence future interest in the subject, as well as career choices in science-related fields.

The third objective was to explore whether gender differences affect the impact of experiential learning on achievement and attitude. The analysis showed no significant gender differences in either achievement or attitude. This suggests that experiential learning is equally effective for both male and female students, supporting the idea that such teaching methods are inclusive and adaptable to diverse student populations. These findings contribute to ongoing discussions about the role of gender in education, particularly in STEM fields, where gender disparities have historically existed.

In conclusion, this study underscores the value of experiential learning in enhancing student performance and fostering positive attitudes in chemistry education. By providing students with practical, hands-on experiences, educators can bridge the gap between theory and practice, making complex scientific concepts more accessible and enjoyable. The absence of significant gender differences further highlights the broad applicability of experiential learning, making it a valuable tool for promoting equity in education. Educators and policymakers should consider incorporating experiential learning methods into science curricula to improve student outcomes and inspire future generations of scientists.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Adopt experiential learning methods in chemistry education: Schools and educators should integrate more hands-on, practical learning experiences into their curricula to enhance student engagement and understanding.

1. Teacher training and development: Teachers should be provided with the necessary training and resources to effectively implement experiential learning strategies in the classroom. This includes workshops and access to laboratory materials.
2. Gender-neutral interventions: Since the study found no significant gender differences in the outcomes of experiential learning, schools should ensure that all students, regardless of gender, have equal access to experiential learning opportunities.
3. Further research on long-term impacts: Future studies should explore the long-term effects of experiential learning on student achievement and attitudes, especially in other STEM subjects, to determine whether the benefits observed in this study persist over time.
4. Incorporate technology-enhanced experiential learning: With the advancement of digital tools, schools should consider integrating virtual labs and simulations to complement physical hands-on activities, particularly in resource-constrained environments.

## 5.4 Implications for Practice

The findings from this study have significant implications for educational practice:

Curriculum development: The success of experiential learning in this study suggests that educational institutions should revise their curricula to prioritize active learning strategies. This could involve a shift from traditional, lecture-based models to more interactive, student-centered approaches.

**Equitable access to learning:** The absence of gender disparities in learning outcomes highlights the importance of ensuring that both male and female students have equal opportunities to engage in experiential learning. Schools should implement gender-neutral policies that promote inclusivity.

**Policy-making:** Policymakers in education should support initiatives that encourage experiential learning, including funding for laboratory resources and professional development programs for teachers. This approach could be instrumental in improving STEM education outcomes at national levels.

**Student engagement strategies:** Teachers can use experiential learning as a strategy to enhance student motivation and interest in chemistry. By making lessons more interactive and relatable, educators can foster a more positive learning environment.

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## STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT TEST ON CHEMISTRY (SATOC)

The Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC) is designed to assess the knowledge, understanding, and application of chemistry concepts taught in senior secondary schools. Below is Students Achievement Test on Chemistry (SATOC) with 25 questions based on the topic "Acids, Bases, and Salts." The questions include multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer formats to assess different levels of understanding.

**Topic: Acids, Bases, and Salts**

**Section A: Multiple Choice (15 Questions)**

1. **Which of the following is a property of acids? a) Sour taste**

b) Bitter taste

c) Slippery feel

d) Neutral taste

1. **A substance that turns blue litmus paper red is a/an:**

a) Base

b) Acid

c) Salt

d) Neutral substance

1. **Which of the following is a common base?**

a) Hydrochloric acid

b) Sodium hydroxide

c) Carbon dioxide

d) Ammonium chloride

1. **The pH value of a neutral solution is:**

a) 14

b) 7

c) 1

d) 3

1. **Which of the following acids is found in vinegar?**

a) Sulfuric acid

b) Acetic acid

c) Hydrochloric acid

d) Nitric acid

1. **When acids react with metals, they generally produce:**

a) Hydrogen gas

b) Oxygen gas

c) Carbon dioxide

d) Nitrogen gas

1. **Which of the following substances is an example of a salt?**

a) Sodium chloride

b) Sodium hydroxide

c) Hydrochloric acid

d) Ammonia

1. **Which of these is a strong acid?**

a) Citric acid

b) Hydrochloric acid

c) Acetic acid

d) Ethanoic acid

1. **What color does phenolphthalein turn in a basic solution?**

a) Red

b) Pink

c) Colorless

d) Blue

1. **Which of the following is not a product of a neutralization reaction?**

a) Water

b) Salt

c) Acid

d) None of the above

1. **Bases react with acids to form:**

a) Water and salt

b) Hydrogen gas

c) Carbon dioxide and water

d) Salt and oxygen

1. **Which of these pH values indicates a basic solution?**

 a) 6

b) 7

c) 5

d) 9

1. **Lemon juice, a common acidic substance, has a pH of around:**

a) 2

b) 7

c) 10

d) 14

1. **Which acid is commonly used in car batteries?**

a) Nitric acid

b) Sulfuric acid

c) Hydrochloric acid

d) Phosphoric acid

1. **Which of these compounds is most likely to form when hydrochloric acid reacts with sodium hydroxide? a) NaCl and H₂O**

b) NaHCO₃ and CO₂

c) NaOH and O₂

d) HCl and NH₃

**Section B: True/False (5 Questions)**

1. **Acids have a pH greater than 7.**

True / False

1. **Bases feel slippery to the touch because of the OH- ions they release.**

True / False

1. **A neutralization reaction always produces a salt and water.**

True / False

1. **Hydrochloric acid is weaker than acetic acid.**

True / False

1. **Pure water is neutral with a pH of 7.**

True / False

**Section C: Short Answer (5 Questions)**

1. Define an acid according to the Arrhenius theory.

Answer:

1. Explain why a strong acid has a lower pH than a weak acid.

Answer:

1. Write the chemical equation for the neutralization reaction between hydrochloric acid and sodium hydroxide.

Answer:

1. Give two examples of household products that contain bases.

Answer:

1. Describe the role of indicators in acid-base titrations.

Answer:

## QUESTIONNAIRE: IMPACT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ON STUDENT ATTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT IN CHEMISTRY

**Section A: Demographic Information**

**Gender:**

Male { }

Female { }

**Age:**

Under 15 { }

15-16 { }

17-18 { }

19 and above { }

**Class Level:**

SS1 { }

SS2 { }

SS3 { }

How often do you participate in chemistry practicals or experiential learning activities?

Always { }

Often { }

Sometimes { }

Rarely { }

Never { }

**Section B: Student Attitude Towards Chemistry and Experiential Learning**

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking the appropriate box. Use the scale provided:

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

* I enjoy learning chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Chemistry is one of my favorite subjects.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Experiential learning makes chemistry more interesting.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I feel more engaged during experiential learning activities than during lectures.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Experiential learning helps me understand chemistry concepts better.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I am confident in my ability to succeed in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I prefer learning chemistry through practical activities rather than through lectures.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I feel motivated to study chemistry when experiential learning methods are used.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I find it difficult to understand chemistry without practical experience.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Chemistry practicals are important for my overall understanding of the subject.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

**Section C: Student Achievement in Chemistry**

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking the appropriate box. Use the scale provided:

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

* My grades in chemistry have improved since we started using experiential learning methods.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I perform better on chemistry tests when I have had hands-on experience with the material.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Experiential learning activities have helped me retain chemistry concepts better.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I find it easier to apply chemistry concepts in exams after participating in experiential learning.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Experiential learning has helped me develop problem-solving skills in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I feel more prepared for my chemistry exams after participating in practicals.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* My overall performance in chemistry has benefited from experiential learning.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I am able to connect theoretical knowledge with practical experience in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I achieve higher scores in chemistry when I am actively involved in experiments.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* My interest in pursuing further studies in chemistry has increased due to experiential learning.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

**Section D: Gender Differences in Learning Outcomes**

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking the appropriate box. Use the scale provided:

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

* Both male and female students benefit equally from experiential learning in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Gender does not affect how well I perform in experiential learning activities in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I believe experiential learning helps reduce gender disparities in chemistry performance.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* In my class, both boys and girls are equally engaged in experiential learning activities.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Experiential learning has helped me overcome gender stereotypes in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I feel that my gender does not impact my ability to perform well in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Teachers treat male and female students equally during chemistry practicals.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* I have noticed that both boys and girls perform well in chemistry when experiential learning is used.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Gender differences in learning outcomes are minimized through experiential learning in chemistry.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }

* Experiential learning makes me more confident in my abilities, regardless of my gender.

1 { }- 2 { }- 3 { }- 4 { }- 5 { }