The Effect of Experiential Learning Cycle on Knowledge, Skill, and Retention of Learning in Gastronomy Education

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Abstract

Gastronomy education relies on integrating theoretical knowledge with hands-on practical competence, yet many culinary programs still depend on traditional demonstration-based instruction that pays limited attention to how students individually process and retain what they learn. This study aims to examine the effect of a structured teaching intervention based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle (concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation) on gastronomy students' knowledge, practical skill performance, and retention of learning, compared with conventional demonstration-based instruction. A quasi-experimental pretest–posttest control group design will be employed with undergraduate gastronomy students enrolled in a Basic Culinary Techniques course, with intact sections assigned to experimental and control groups. While the control group receives traditional demonstration-and-practice instruction, the experimental group will be taught through a curriculum explicitly structured around Kolb's four-stage cycle. Knowledge will be measured through a content-validated achievement test, skill performance through a standardized culinary task scored with an analytic rubric by independent raters, and retention through a follow-up assessment administered four to six weeks after the intervention. The experimental group is expected to outperform the control group on all three outcomes, with the retention results offering particular insight into the durability of experiential approaches in vocational training. By jointly examining knowledge, skill, and retention—an outcome combination rarely addressed in prior applications of Kolb's model to culinary or gastronomy education—this study aims to provide empirically grounded, practice-oriented evidence for vocational curriculum design in the culinary field.

Keywords

Experiential learning, gastronomy education, kolb's learning cycle, skill retention, vocational education.