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Examining the factors of experiential learning and teaching style: A case study of a hospitality and tourism program

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the impacts of experiential-education-teaching-modules on teaching performance and the moderating effects of teaching styles. Students underwent a series of experiential teaching modules, including theoretical courses, tour-planning competitions, and community field tours, which were utilized to evaluate teaching performance and learning of social responsibility. Results revealed that (1) The experiential teaching module resulted in improved learning outcomes for students. (2) Teaching styles moderated the results of the experiential teaching modules, and even reversed the effects of passive-experiential lessons, in which the quality of teaching turned out to be better than that of the active-experiential lessons.

1. Introduction

Tourism service personnel are faced with cross-cultural differences in language and interpersonal communication (Park, Yoo, Kim, & Lee, 2018); moreover, they are challenged with high-pressure, chaotic service contexts that entail risk and anxiety (Hammill, Nguyen, & Henderson, 2020). Therefore, the goal of higher education in hospitality management is to train personnel to possess the ability to confront various situations in restaurants, catering or tourism-related companies (Lee, Huh, & Jones, 2016). Lee, Kang, Choi, Lee, and Olds (2019) proposed that providing a diverse and global educational environment is vital to develop the overall potential and talent of higher education students. Scholars discussed how to develop appropriate hospitality management for higher education programs within limited educational resources; for instance, self-regulated learning (Stefanou, Stolk, Prince, Chen, & Lord, 2013), tourism-focused English (Park et al., 2018), co-creation of curricula (Pappalepore & Farrell, 2017), feedback (Semley, Huang, & Dalton, 2016), undergraduate research experience design (Kirillova & Au, 2020), teaching style (Prescott, 2014), game-based student response system (Ranieri, Raffaghelli, & Bruni, 2018), internships and classroom learning (Stansbie, Nash, & Chang, 2016), and students' needs, expectations, perceptions and experiences (Adie & Wakefield, 2011; Lee et al., 2019; Rudd, Budziszewski, & Litzinger, 2014).

Among hospitality education programs, learning-by-doing is the most popular teaching method for students in Europe and Asia (Lu, 2021; Pappalepore & Farrell, 2017), which can also be applied in tourism service environment (Lee et al., 2016). Learning-by-doing provides an interaction opportunity between students and instructor in order to resolve problems of the business environment in a real world. It is a kind of experiential teaching approach that allows students to participate, enhancing learning effects, and developing professional competencies that are expected from businesses (Chiou, Tien, & Tang, 2020; Lu, 2021; Stefanou et al., 2013). Therefore, students can cultivate the required abilities of the target field by experiencing, feeling and consequently realizing them in a more

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authentic context (Bower, 2014; Hawkins & Weiss, 2004).

However, past studies (e.g., Pappalepore & Farrell, 2017; Prescott, 2014) have explored how educators design learning-by-doing experiential education modules. Unfortunately, there is no further explanation on how teachers become facilitator-guides. Therefore, the present study explores how to design experiential education activities and assess their impact on teaching performance. Furthermore, within a particular experiential education program, there is the phenomenon of differences in individual teaching performance. One possible reason is that a teacher's teaching style (e.g., Dimmock, Weeks, & Ashton-Hay, 2019; Kirillova & Au, 2020; Lally, van Jaarsveld, Potts, & Wardle, 2010) may have a moderating effect on the relationship between specific experiential education activities and teaching performance. For example, different teaching styles utilized by teachers may affect their relationship with students. An instructor who has passion and cares about students may help students consider a course to be less difficult or more willing to participate in discussions. Thus, it can be seen that teaching styles have the possibility of interfering with students' perception of a course's syllabus and its effectiveness, which deserves researchers' attention.

Based on these premises, the contributions of this study are to help educators understand how to design suitable educational experiential activities. Therefore, this study tested hypotheses in two teaching experiments. As for study 1, it explores the relationship between educational experiential modules and teaching performance, whereas study 2 examines the moderating effect of teaching styles on the relationship between experiential education modules and teaching performance.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical background: Experiential education

Stansbie et al. (2016) point out that the "traditional" teaching style involves teachers transferring information to students. However, it may become difficult to remember facts instead of meanings. The scholars thus argued that students can understand the concepts that activities and education are intended to convey through personal participation and experience (Association for Experiential Education (AEE, 2012). Hawkins and Weiss (2004) and Bower (2014) advocate that designing diversified teaching activities in the teaching process allows students to actively learn with a purpose. Hence, students can experience and feel, as well as recognize, understand and develop required abilities.

The theoretical basis of experiential learning was developed by Dewey in 1938 as the learning-by-doing theory, and then compiled by Kolb, Lewin and Piaget (as cited in Bos, McCabe, & Johnson, 2015). Dale (1969) argues that learners' understanding comes from personal or practical experience. In the study of Dale and Mccarthy (2006), learning methods can be divided into passive and active learning. Passive learning involves learning through texts, pictures, exhibitions and observations made while doing field research. Active learning includes such learning activities as drama experience, design experience, and other direct learning methods involving experience with a purpose. Jackson and Caffarella (1994, pp. 5–16) proposed an outline for an experiential learning module. It includes (1) learner's characteristics and needs, (2) the foundation of experiential learning concepts, (3) the methods and technology of experiential learning activities and (4) evaluation process and results. In addition, Boyatzis and Kolb (1995) proposed that experiential learning is composed of stages: experiencing stage→reflecting stage→generalizing stage→applying stage. These four stages are continuous and may occur at any time, and any generated experience will affect a certain future experience, which can be seen as an ascending spiral process. In light of this, the specific experience will be formed by self-observation, reflection, and summarization which will then be applied to the next specific experience.

Regarding empirical research on experiential education, Ettenger (2009) advocated that tourism major students visit destinations, observe and consume tourism products and then evaluate local marketing and management strategies. Schreck, Weibach, and Reitsma (2020) believed that hospitality and tourism students lack certain skills at the beginning of their career, which may be caused by the passive learning environment or the lack of practical experience in the training process. Therefore, students need to be immersed in the active learning process to gain abilities. Many researchers (e.g., Arcodia, Cavlek, & Humpe, 2019; Fernández-Gámez, Rosales-Pérez, Molina-Gómez, & Mora-Lucena, 2018; Green et a.., 2015; Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019; Hales & Jennings, 2017) also agree with experiential learning theory and use different tools to design curricula.

Guachalla and Gledhill (2019) utilized experiential learning to design course modules in order to help students learn about employability in the tourism field. Employability depends on writing an autobiography and resume effectively, talent, psychological attributes, job interview skills, and so on. The courses developed in the above-mentioned study include such things as hands-on group cooperation, written tests, personal interviews, and how to write autobiographies, resumes and cover letters. Then students develop the abilities after their experiences are formed by the course contents and cooperation with each other. Arcodia, Novais, Cavlek, and Humpe (2019) propose that tourism education start with field trips, which can stimulate student motivation and learning via travel, fun, novelty, etc. The above-mentioned study points out the benefits for both students (e.g., in-depth learning, interpersonal skills and professionalism) and the destination (e.g., development of a niche market and deepening of the destination experience). Pappalepore and Farrell (2017) took the United Kingdom as an example and revealed that traditional higher education is insufficient in its ability to co-create curricula that empowers students. They argued that students as co-creators to co-create the curricula, such as actively contributing to course or unit design and these result in developed greater confidence, capacity and responsibility (e.g., Bovill, 2014; Chiou et al., 2020).

In addition, there are still many curricula designs available in the experiential learning field; for instance, curriculum software and student involvement (Green, Chang, Tanford, & Moll, 2015), games and experiential learning (Eckhaus, Klein, & Kantor, 2017), outdoor training and emotional intelligence development (Fernández-Gámez et al., 2018), a case study related to improving students' knowledge of sustainability concepts (Hales & Jennings, 2017), application of a twin-cycle experiential learning model and student

leadership skills and professional knowledge (Schreck, Weilbach, & Reitsma, 2020).

Learning from experience is a teaching method which effectively enhances learning effectiveness. Moreover, Kolb (1984) proposes that people learn and acquire knowledge through practice; that is, the experience transforms into knowledge. Horng, Hsiao, Liu, Chou, and Chung (2020) argued that ethics and corporate social responsibility curriculum includes individual, organizational, and societal levels and discusses personal morality, ethics, responsibility, organizational ethics and social responsibility in the environment at both the micro and the macro level. Individual social responsibility refers to a person who feels responsible towards the society and will be concerned about solving and eliminating problems for others, even if there is nothing to gain from such conducts (Davis, Rives, & de Maya, 2017). Some scholars (e.g., Horng et al., 2020; Keegan, Losardo, & McCullough, 2017) indicated that experiential teaching method (e.g., civic engagement) has been applied extensively to a variety of undergraduate disciplines and has increased the sense of students' values and social responsibility. Guachalla and Gledhill (2019) found that when teachers use experiential learning to design curricula modules, it helps students effectively build the required employability skills for the tourism field, such as effectively writing an autobiography and resume, job interview skills, learning capacities, students need to take psychological measurement which refers to measure psychological qualities (such as knowledge, attitudes and opinions, emotions, cognitions, and personality) and so on. In addition, El Hanandeh (2016) argues that field trips provide students with learning opportunities such as cooperative skills and interpersonal communication skills through real social event contexts. Therefore, the author of present study infers that teaching modules with an experiential teaching approach can allow students to understand the real workplace during the experiential process, which subsequently converts the experience into professional knowledge and a sense of responsibility for the social environment.

H1. A teaching module based on the concepts of experiential teaching can enhance the education quality and strengthen student's social responsibility

2.2. The moderating effect of teaching styles

The term teaching style refers to the teacher's preferred way of solving problems and performing tasks. Decision-making in the teaching process differs from each person or group (Sternberg, 1997). Fischer and Fischer (1979) define teaching style as the behavior that teachers show during interaction with learners. Teaching styles can be divided into two categories: teacher-centered and learner-centered (Prescott, 2014). The former regards the teacher as the leader in classroom activities as students play a passive role. The latter regards the teacher as the facilitator in the process of student learning (Mascolo, 2009). The teacher-centered classroom emphasizes that knowledge is transferred by teachers to students, and this can be regarded as a traditional teaching style. Students in this context do not have many choices and are passive in the learning process. Park et al. (2018) pointed out that Korean students' satisfaction with learning was much lower because Korean teaching styles make it difficult to create an interesting atmosphere. Teachers tend to use serious and authoritative methods to control students' behavior in the classroom. On the other hand, a student-centered classroom focuses on students' learning and pays attention to what students do. Students have more choices and are more active in learning (O'Neill & McMahon, 2005). They are more willing to participate in course discussions (Pappalepore & Farrell, 2017). Students think the course is relatively less difficult due to an enthusiastic and caring teacher (Kirillova & Au, 2020). Teachers also maintain a flexible teaching style and are more willing to embrace international students with different cultural perspectives (Lee et al., 2019). It is important to note that teaching style affects learning quality; for example, teachers' active learning style assists the development of teacher-student relationships and enables students' engagement in teaching programs (Zepke & Leach, 2010). In addition, teaching style can accelerate students' adaptation to the learning environment and develop related skills during the teaching process (Dimmock et al., 2019). It can also affect the quality of the learning process (Ranieri et al., 2018). Therefore, the present author concludes that when teachers adopt a student-centered teaching style, they can improve the teaching performance of passive teaching methods.

H2. Student-centered teaching style can reduce the difference in teaching quality between passive and active experiential teaching.

3. Study 1 Research methods

3.1. Experimental materials design

Based on past research related to the tourism field (Chou, Horng, Liu, & Hsiao, 2019; Xu, Wang, & Wen, 2019), the organization of this teaching experiment (such as implemented steps, courses and teaching methods) is divided into three parts: (1) teaching course schedule, (2) curricula and planning, (3) course requirements. Ranieri et al. (2018) points out that it is beneficial for students to have 12 weeks of courses for a longitudinal study to examine students' behaviors. Lally et al. (2010) also argue that people takes at least 66 days to change their behavior. Therefore, an 18 week teaching schedule with 2 h per week was designed. For the design of the experiential learning course module, Guachalla and Gledhill (2019) was referred to. The purpose of the course was to train students in the professional skills required in the tourism field. Therefore, when introducing the course, teachers communicated with students and jointly designed the course contents and process. The course contents included marine knowledge, board games, biology, community histories, event planning and service management (Chang, 2017; Ranieri et al., 2018). The author explained the course and activity design in the first week of class, so that students realized that participation in the activities were necessary content of the course as well as one of the standards for performance evaluation. Students could express their opinions and adjust the course planning. After teachers and students mutually understood and agreed to the course objectives (introduction lesson), students were required to participate in a course composed of five stages (T1-T5) (as Fig. 1). T1 began with classes on marine knowledge/theory and group

discussion, e.g., marine resources, pollution, protected areas and wetland environments (5 classes); T2: event design classes, e.g., marine sightseeing tour planning, community creation and leisure activities design (6 classes); T3: a field trip to a traditional fishing village (2 classes), and tour-planning design competition (1 class); T4: implementation of fishing village leisure activities (3 classes); T5: a teaching performance exhibition and questionnaire survey (1 class). In terms of course requirements, about six to seven students in each class designed traditional fishing village leisure activities that were implemented in authentic traditional fishing villages. Photos were taken during each activity. After the tour, students were asked to fill in the questionnaire. Finally, each group reported their reflections on the teaching process and broadcasts videos which record the students' entire performance and submitted a complete written report.

3.2. Questionnaire development

Four parts were included in the questionnaire: (1) Teaching quality refers to whether the educational goals met or exceeded the students' expectations (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). Additionally, based on Liang (2017), participants were asked about marine and cultural knowledge and the degree to which leisure activities were integrated into the surrounding community and scenery. (2) A total of six questions based on Vaughan and Ardoin (2014) were included to assess students' conscientiousness regarding their responsibility to the cooperative community in terms of respect and care for it. (3) A total of 13 questions based on Kibicho (2008) were included to assess students' perceptions community-based tourism development, which includes the need for marine tourism development to fairly incorporate all community stakeholders and fairly distribute benefits. (4) A total of four questions based on Warton and Brander (2017) were included to assess students' attitudes towards changes in the marine environment. The operational items were students' willingness to actively participate in this course. All dimensions mentioned above were measured via seven point Likert scale.

3.3. Data collection

Activity planning and designing of leisure and recreation is a one-semester required course. Two classes participated in the teaching experiment. The participants were the second-year leisure and recreation management students of National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism. Before the class, the present author and the instructor fully discussed the experiential teaching principles as well as the main purpose of this research, planned the contents of the course and carried out teaching after making an agreement. In the first week of class, the teacher introduced the courses and experimental outlines. Training was then implemented according to the theoretical courses. After the theoretical courses (viz., modules T1-T2), the students' recreational planning competitions were processed (viz., module T3), and the community field tours were carried out (viz., module T4). Finally, presentations on teaching performances were displayed, and a questionnaire survey was conducted (viz., module T5). The participants consisted of two classes numbering 33 (four males and 29 females) and 35 (nine males and 26 females).

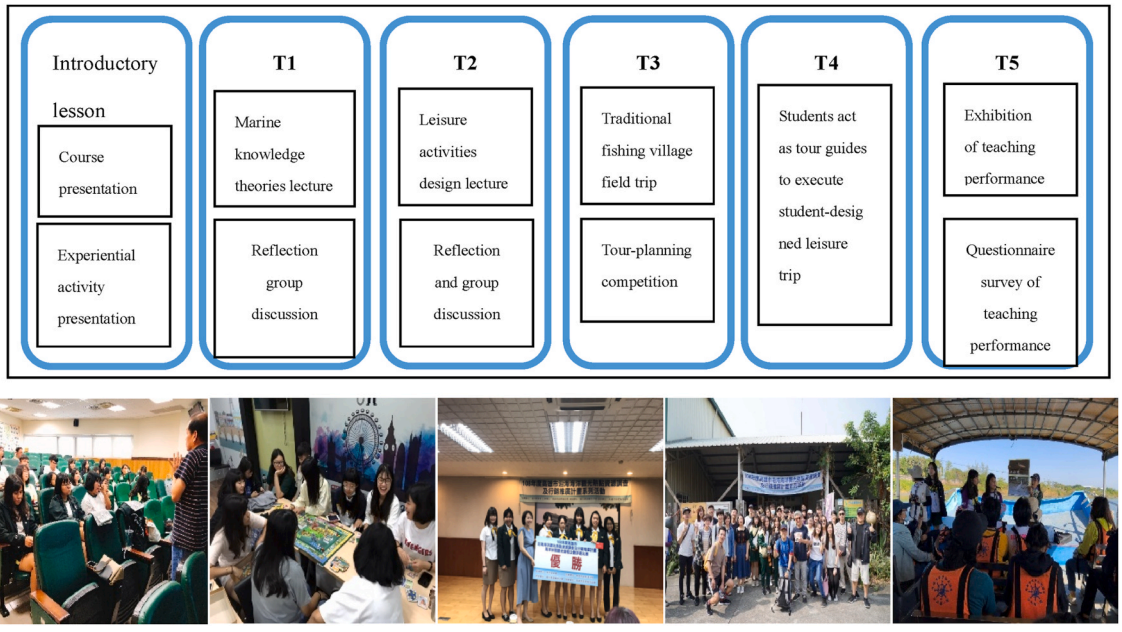

Fig. 1. Experimental design procedure.

3.4. Statistical results

In this study, SPSS14.0 was used for exploratory factor analysis. Principal component analysis and maximum rotation were used to extract eigenvalue factors greater than 1. The correlation coefficient between each item and dimension was higher than 0.5 (0.505–0.913), with three factors in total. The accumulated variance explained was 78.631%, and the reliability was 0.91–0.97, which met the reliability and validity standards detailed in Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) (see Table 1). The factors are as follows: factor 1: Responsibilities to community; factor 2: Students' perception of community-based tourism development; factor 3: Attitudes toward marine environment.

Firstly, students' perception of their own proactive participation in the course was high ($M_A = 6.06$; $M_B = 5.63$) and there was no difference ($t = 1.754$, $p > .05$) between the two classes, indicating that the students had the same willingness to participate. Second, after the course introduction, students agreed with the modified curricula and the activity completeness (Table 2). No matter which class listened to the course introduction, all students believed that participating in the experiential learning module could provide them with knowledge of marine ecology and culture ($5.03 < M < 5.91$) as well as the integration of the surrounding ecological environment and scenery into tourism activities ($5.34 < M < 6.12$). Compared with the students in Class B, the students in Class A agreed that their marine knowledge was enriched and that the activities were integrated with the environment via experiential learning classes ($t = 3.326$–3.396, $p < .05$).

T-test of study 1 (Table 3) shows that regardless of class, students who participated in the course understood the marine ecology and crisis. Hence, they were willing to protect the local environment and abide by the local rules. However, the results of a *t*-test reveal that class A's students had higher perceptions of responsibility to community than Class B students ($t = 2.555$–4.354, $p < .05$). As Table 3B shows, it was found that students in any class were willing to cooperate with local communities to create marine tourism activities. In the process, students had come to believe that (1) cooperating with community associations has lots of benefits and that community cooperation is the driving force behind local tourism development. (2) Students' professional abilities can strengthen the integrity and fairness of marine tourism activities, which is suitable for small-scale operations. (3) Through the process of cooperation and mutual respect, students' opinions could be accepted and implemented.

However, Class A's students had a higher perceptions of responsibility to community than B's ($t = 3.884$–5.936, $p < .05$). As Table 3C shows, all students in either class strongly agreed that individuals must pay attention to changes in the marine environment and change their behaviors towards the marine environment ($M > 5.34$). However, Class A's students had a higher the perception of attitude toward marine environment change than class B's students, and they believed that individuals should alter their attention and attitude toward marine environment ($t = 2.092$–3.667, $p < .05$).

4. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that when adopting this experiential teaching method, students are guided to plan marine tourism

Table 1
Exploratory factor analysis of study 1.

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
A1 I find wonderful things in the local ecological environment.	.505		
A2 I pick up and bring back my own trash.	.895		
A3 I show respect for the local environment.	.913		
A4 I educate others about the community's ecological environment.	.731		
A5 I abide by local rules and environmental protection laws.	.848		
A6 I keep others safe.	.866		
B1 I benefit a lot from working with the community association to plan tourism itineraries.		.568	
B2 Local communities play an important role in tourism development.		.521	
B3 Cooperation between the community and tourism planners can strengthen the overall performance of tourism itineraries (activity integrity)		.527	
B4 Most of our decisions can be implemented in the process of cooperation.		.703	
B5 This itinerary can achieve the expected goals.		.862	
B6 Opinions from the community association are valuable and help us to form the goals of the tourism itinerary.		.801	
B7 We will not argue with the matters that have been agreed upon.		.814	
B8 The purpose and goals of this tourism itinerary reflect the needs of the community.		.734	
B9 Local residents are important for the management of community associations and tourism activities.		.745	
B10 Compared with a large-scale marine tourism itinerary, a small-scale itinerary is more beneficial to the community.		.716	
B11 The Students learn to respect and observe each other from the planning process of tourism itinerary.		.673	
B12 All participants are equally important in communication and decision making.		.551	
B13 The benefits and costs of community tourism development are fairly distributed.		.581	
C1 Caring about changes in the marine environment will affect my attitude.			.751
C2 My attention will be reflected by the changes of marine environment.			.829
C3 I will consider the impacts of marine environment on earth in the next five years.			.863
C4 I have certain knowledge of the warming of the marine environment and its changes.			.861
Cumulative % (α)	62.334 (.94)	72.915 (.91)	78.361 (.97)

Table 2
Teaching quality.

Item	class	M	SD	t	p
I have gained various marine and cultural knowledge during the cooperation with marine tourism process.	A	6.18	0.98	3.396	.001
	B	5.29	1.18		
I think the marine tourism activities effectively combine with the surrounding ecological environment and scenery.	A	6.12	0.96	3.326	.001
	B	5.34	0.97		

Table 3
T-test of study 1.

3A responsibility to community						3B students' perception of community-based tourism development					
Item	class	M	SD	t	p	Item	Class	Mean	SD	t	p
Total	A	6.68	0.54	4.518	0.000	Total	A	6.49	.63	6.046	0.000
	B	5.88	0.87				B	5.46	0.76		
A1	A	6.45	0.87	4.330	0.000	B1	A	6.61	0.70	5.217	0.000
	B	5.31	1.25				B	5.54	0.95		
A2	A	6.73	0.63	2.555	0.013	B2	A	6.55	0.71	3.884	0.000
	B	6.23	0.94				B	5.71	1.02		
A3	A	6.79	0.48	4.001	0.000	B3	A	6.61	0.66	5.062	0.000
	B	6.06	0.94				B	5.60	0.95		
A4	A	6.61	0.61	4.354	0.000	B4	A	6.48	0.83	5.448	0.000
	B	5.71	1.02				B	5.26	1.01		
A5	A	6.79	0.48	3.802	0.000	B5	A	6.36	0.93	4.226	0.000
	B	6.06	1.00				B	5.37	1.00		
3C students' attitude toward marine environment change						B6	A	6.30	0.88	4.745	0.000
							B	5.20	1.02		
Item	Class	Mean	SD	t	p	B7	A	6.30	0.98	5.102	0.000
							B	5.06	1.03		
Total	A	6.27	0.96	3.592	0.001	B8	A	6.39	0.83	5.092	0.000
	B	5.51	0.77				B	5.34	0.87		
C1	A	6.00	1.30	2.431	0.018	B9	A	6.61	0.61	5.936	0.000
	B	5.34	0.91				B	5.40	1.01		
C2	A	6.48	0.91	3.352	0.001	B10	A	6.52	0.67	4.393	0.000
	B	5.74	0.92				B	5.60	1.01		
C3	A	6.06	1.06	2.092	0.040	B11	A	6.64	0.60	5.219	0.000
	B	5.49	1.20				B	5.63	0.94		
C4	A	6.33	0.96	3.667	0.000	B12	A	6.61	0.66	4.118	0.000
	B	5.46	1.01				B	5.77	0.97		
C5	A	6.24	1.12	3.100	0.003	B13	A	6.42	0.83	4.245	0.000
	B	5.49	0.89				B	5.49	0.98		

Class A: 33 participants; Class B: 35participants.

itineraries that are implemented in the field as well as learning the theoretical underpinnings of the course. In terms of teaching quality, students agreed that the in-depth understanding of marine knowledge and its integration with the surrounding environment, attractions and tours was achieved via experiential teaching. This suggests that when implementing learning-by-doing teaching methods in the field (see Bos et al., 2015), students can have an authentic and immediate experience with the local community in commercial tourism situations. They can learn more actively and obtain a better teaching performance from their instructors (e.g., Chiou et al., 2020). In addition, they were able to raise their awareness of social responsibilities (Horng et al., 2020; Keegan et al., 2017; Lu, 2021), such as having a higher sense of responsibility towards cooperating with the community, identifying with community tourism development, learning how to engage in mutual respect and cooperation with community associations, and being more concerned about changes in the marine environment.

In accordance with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, this study employed theoretical courses, planning competitions, community field visits, and on-site tours to give learners the opportunity to gain practical experience. At the end of the semester, the teaching performance and the reflection on learning were processed so that students could re-consider the process and then internalize and transform the experience. On the other hand, Ettenger (2009) advocated that tourism major students should have the opportunity to discuss and negotiate with stakeholders during the process of tourism production and consumption in order to observe and consume tourism products and experiences via visiting those destinations. In this study, students were given opportunities for interviews and observations in traditional fishing villages. This type of active learning experience is also the teaching approach recommended by several studies (e.g., Arcodia et al., 2019; Fernández-Gámez et al., 2018; Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019; Hales & Jennings, 2017; Schreck et al., 2020). However, compared with Class B's students, Class A's had a higher perception of teaching quality and social responsibility. After interviewing three students in each class, the author points out that the teachers in each class are different and have different teaching styles, which results in students having different feelings about the course. Class A's teacher preferred students to learn actively, encouraged students to find answers themselves, and then discuss with each other. Therefore, this study conducted

study two to test hypothesis two.

5. Study 2 Research methods

5.1. Experimental materials design

In the teaching course schedule, the course lasted 18 weeks, with a total of 2 h per week. In the final week, teaching performances were processed and questionnaire surveys were conducted. In the curricula and planning, the course contents included agricultural/rural knowledge, rural ecology, community humanities and history, activity design and service management. The classes consisted of theoretical topics taught by instructors, and the students planned and implemented their own competitions. There are four stages of course training (as Fig. 2): T1 rural knowledge theory (5 classes) and activity design and service management (6 classes); T2 tour-planning competitions (1 class) and traditional rural visits (2 classes); T3 rural recreational activities and rural film appreciation (3 classes); T4 teaching performance exhibition and questionnaire survey (1 class). In addition, the goal of the curriculum was to design a set of one-day trips to rural communities and the curriculum learning types were divided into: active and passive learning. In the active learning, class A & class B were aimed at designing and implementing rural community tours. Class A was assisted by the activity company to help students to design one-day trip to rural community, while class B was carried out by students. Students planned and implemented their own competitions. In the passive learning experience, the so-called "traditional" class experience, students received theoretical lectures, participated in tour-planning competitions, watched videos and visited rural locations. The teaching style utilized student-centered teaching in the passive-experiential teaching class (class C), which meant that teachers paid more attention to students' learning and what students did. Students had more choices and control over their personal learning (Fischer & Fischer, 1979; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005; Sternberg, 1997). In addition, in the active-experiential teaching class (class A & B), teachers taught according to the course syllabus which can be flexibly adjusted according to the suggestions from the students. The course requirements were the same as in study 1. The participants in each class were 44, 46, and 32 students.

5.2. Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was designed by the author in accordance with teaching needs. Three scholars of the tourism field were invited to make corrections and establish validity. Cronbach's alpha reliability scores were all higher than 0.7. The questionnaire was pre-tested by a class of 40 students in 2015 and later formalized. Since the teaching process included theoretical courses, planning competitions, and organizing rural community tourism tours, the contents of the questionnaire included (1) students' perceptions of

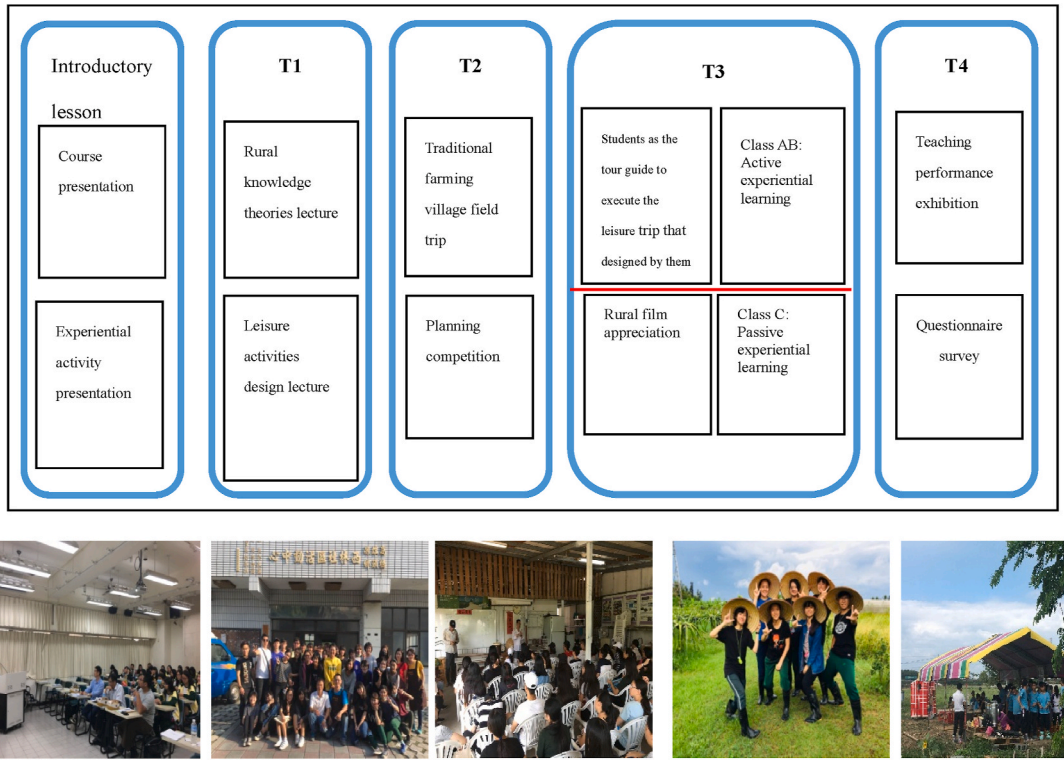

Fig. 2. Experimental design procedures.

professional knowledge gained via coursework; (2) three questions to assess students' willingness to take similar courses in the future; (3) three questions regarding teaching performance, which includes students' intention toward recommending community to others, reflection on teaching and learning, and acquisition of various management knowledge and skills. The operational items were the degree to which students were willing to actively participate in this course and student perception of the student-centered teaching style.

5.3. Data collection

Activity planning and designing of leisure and recreation is a one-semester required course. Three classes participated in the teaching experiment. The participants were the second-year leisure and recreation management students of National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism. The author of the present study served as an instructor. During the first week of class, the teacher introduced the courses and experimental outlines, and implemented training according to the theoretical courses. After theoretical courses were completed, a tour-planning design competition (T1-T2) was held. The T3 stage was different, as classes A and B received active experiential learning during field trips to rural areas. In contrast, Class C received passive experiential learning, using videos and discussions related to rural community trips. Finally, teaching performances were displayed and the questionnaire survey was conducted.

5.4. Statistical results

This study used ANOVA analysis to test the following operational items (Table 4). First, student perception of active participation in the course was high ($M > 5$) and there was no difference ($F = 2.529$, $p > .05$) between the three classes. It can be seen that students in all three classes had the same degree of active participation at the beginning of the course. However, Class C's students perceived to a noticeably higher degree than Classes A and B that the teaching was inclined toward a student-centered approach ($F = 13.809$, $p < .001$), which meant the operation was successful and suitable.

SPSS14.0 was employed for exploratory factor analysis. Principal component analysis and maximum rotation were used to extract eigenvalue factors greater than 1. The correlation coefficient between each item and dimension was higher than 0.5 (0.621–0.929), with three factors in total. The accumulation of variance explained was 76.480%, and the reliability was 0.69–0.89, which meets the reliability standard (Table 5).

In theory, active-experiential learning can provide better learning of professional knowledge. However, according to the results of the ANOVA analysis, it was found that students who received active-experiential learning for acquisition of professional knowledge were not significantly better than that of the passive-experiential learning students ($F = 0.389$–1.13, $p > .05$) (as shown in Table 6A). In terms of future willingness to take courses (see Table 6B), there were similar findings ($F = 0.375$–2.132, $p > .05$) as well. In terms of teaching performance (see Table 6C), whether it was working with others, improving reflection, or enriching management knowledge and skills, Class C's students were significantly higher than those in Classes A and B ($F = 3.313$–7.917, $p < .05$).

5.5. Discussion

Based on the results ascertained, this study found that teaching styles did interfere with experiential learning results. The student-centered teaching style (Dorta-Afonso, 2019; Prescott, 2014; Ruhanen & McLennan, 2012) in this study appears to have made teaching more acceptable to students, resulting in more positive responses. Similar to the arguments of Zepke and Leach (2010), this study confirms that when teachers incorporated students' viewpoints and flexibly adjusted the course contents and schedule in the passive-experiential teaching module, students became more willing to take similar courses and were able to gain professional knowledge. This reduces differences in teaching quality among various courses in active-experiential teaching, such as theoretical courses, planning programs, and implementation of community tourism activities. Hypothesis two is confirmed by the results of this study, which indicates the importance of reshaping teaching styles of university teachers toward a more student-centered approach. However, there remain some critical issues that challenge the reform of teaching styles in hospitality and tourism higher education. First, Hammill et al. (2020) point out that learning motivation is relatively lower among college students because they are adults who are not restrained by traditional rules, and they get pressure from work. Therefore, teachers teaching in such a context may gradually lose confidence and become unwilling to change their teaching styles. Second, the declining birthrate (Vollset et al., 2020) has caused many schools to focus on student recruitment at the expense of quality education, especially in Taiwan where the declining birthrate is becoming more serious. It is believed that the same problems will appear in other countries such as Japan and United States. However,

Table 4
Manipulation check.

Item	Individual willingness to actively participate in this course			Personal perception that teaching approach is student-centered		
Class	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class A	Class B	Class C
No	44	46	32	44	46	32
Mean	5.14	5.35	5.75	4.41	4.50	5.91
SD	1.15	1.22	1.16	1.44	1.35	1.20
$F_{(2, 119)}$ (p)	2.529(.084)			13.809(.000), Class C > A, B		

Table 5
Exploratory factor analysis of study 2.

Items	Learning of professional knowledge	Willingness to take courses in the future	Teaching Performance
I can learn and understand management related-knowledge from lectures received in the theoretical classes.	.830		
I can learn and understand management-related knowledge from handling experiential activities	.929		
I can learn and understand management related-knowledge from planning experiential activities.	.870		
I am willing to participate in this kind of experiential activity next time.		.903	
Taking similar courses in the future will be my first choice.		.878	
I tell others about the great experience I had during this course.		.828	
I am happy to work with other members during the course activities.			.823
Writing reflections can improve personal learning.			.621
I acquired various management knowledge and skills in the process of co-creating value by participating in simulated company activities.			.897
Eigenvalue	3.871	1.839	1.203
Cumulative % (α)	42.673 (.89)	63.110 (.89)	76.480 (.69)

Table 6
Hypothesis two test results.

6A From the XX course explanation, students learn and understand professional knowledge	Theory courses in the classroom			Simulation of company management activities			Conduct community tourism activity		
Class	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class A	Class B	Class C
No	44	46	32	44	46	32	44	46	32
Mean	5.02	5.24	5.34	5.77	5.85	5.38	5.61	5.89	5.47
Standard Deviation	1.53	1.54	1.91	1.24	1.23	1.88	1.35	1.27	1.70
$F_{(2, 119)}$ (p)	F = .389(.678)			1.130(.327)			.908(.406)		
6B Willingness to take courses in the future	I will join this community tourism activity next time.			Taking similar courses in the future will be my first choice.			I tell others about the great experience in this course.		
lass	**Class A**	**Class B**	**Class C**	**Class A**	**Class B**	**Class C**	**Class A**	**Class B**	**Class C**
No	44	46	32	44	46	32	44	46	32
Mean	5.25	5.46	5.50	5.05	5.28	5.19	5.39	5.89	5.66
Standard Deviation	1.14	1.19	1.27	1.22	1.29	1.42	1.10	1.04	1.38
$F_{(2, 119)}$ (p)	.509(.602)			.375(.688)			2.132(.123)		
6C Teaching performance	Willing to work with others			Learning reflection to improve learning effectiveness			Enrichment of management knowledge and skills		
Class	**Class A**	**Class B**	**Class C**	**Class A**	**Class B**	**Class C**	**Class A**	**Class B**	**Class C**
No	44	46	44	46	32	32	44	46	32
Mean	4.52	4.97	5.56	4.85	5.66	5.91	4.39	4.50	5.63
Standard Deviation	2.03	1.69	1.32	1.69	1.31	1.20	1.63	1.50	1.04
$F_{(2, 119)}$ (p)	3.313(.040), Class C > A			7.917(.001), Class C > A, B			3.285(.041), Class C > A, B		

from the results of this study, it can be inferred that teaching approach can improve the effectiveness of passive experiential teaching.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore the impacts of experiential education teaching modules on teaching performance and the moderating effects of teaching styles. The contributions of this study are: (1) Confirmation that experiential teaching is not only one of the most popular methods for students in the hospitality and tourism education program, but that it also compensates for the gap in inadequate design of teaching experiments (Pappalepore & Farrell, 2017). (2) This study also provides a model suitable for course schedules, content and planning, as well as specific design standards and procedures that better meet students' needs. If hospitality and tourism education programs provide a sufficient theoretical curriculum foundation to cultivate professional knowledge and further provide students the opportunity to design and implement their own community tours that allow students to participate in and experience learning activities in a personally meaningful, active, and purposeful way, an optimal learning experience may be achieved (Bower, 2014; Hawkins & Weiss, 2004). (3) This research addressed the moderating effect of teaching styles on the relationship between specific experiential teaching activities and teaching performance (Kirillova & Au, 2020). For future teaching researchers, it is necessary to re-examine the role that teaching styles play in hospitality and tourism education and how teaching styles may be

reshaped for improved learning outcomes.

The practical contributions of this study are: (1) This study provides specific course process design and content. In the field of experiential learning, researchers have proposed many tools employed in different courses, such as software (Green et al., 2015), games (Eckhaus et al., 2017), outdoor training (Fernández-Gámez et al., 2018), case study (Hales & Jennings, 2017), and Twin-Cycle Experiential Learning Model. (2) This study took marine tourism and rural community tourism as cases. It may provide methods and techniques for experiential teaching activities. There should be detailed planning for classroom learning and field activity design, curriculum content, community experience design, and experiential itinerary design. These design considerations should be integrated so that they fit the principles and regulations for activity design, enabling students to have sufficient professional abilities, such as teamwork, cooperative skills, and interpersonal communication skills (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019). This may allow them to develop suitable leisure itineraries in their future careers. Also, there are other types of teaching styles besides teacher- or student-centered teaching styles, such as autonomy supportive (Adie & Wakefield, 2011) and so on. Higher education institutions such as universities should understand that an authoritarian style (Park et al., 2018) is no longer popular with students. Therefore, tertiary education institutions must provide sufficient teaching resources and require teachers to actively participate in teaching design workshops in order to enhance personal teaching ability.

There are four limitations of this study. First, second-year students of National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism were used in this study. Because there are different types of universities, such as general higher education universities, colleges, as well as students in different grades, it is recommended that future research implement the same experiential teaching methods in different research fields. Second, the evaluations of teaching performances were extremely diversified. This study used only the students' subjective perception as the evaluation standard. In the future, it is suggested that objective scores or actual tests by students be added to evaluate teaching performance. For example, though it is relatively rare, objective evaluation of planning activities may be undertaken as it involves students' writing abilities. Third, this study adopted a quasi-experimental method and implemented community tourism tours. In order to reduce the possibility of experimental deviation, the present researcher/author tried his best to communicate and discuss with each participant in advance, such as lecturers, community residents and associations, and local governmental departments responsible for tourism development. In addition, if students did not want to participate in the experiment, the researcher provided detail information and discussed with students to avoid the bias. Of course, future research can add to a control group to provide more rigorous experimental design standards (Ranieri et al., 2018). Fourth, this research used a cross-sectional approach to explore the performance of students' specific courses. However, higher education is a continuous learning process, and future research could benefit from a longitudinal study (Hammill et al., 2020) that investigates students' learning performances over a longer period of learning.

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