

Evaluating Interior Design Lecturers' Perspectives on Educational Field Trips in Precedent Studies: Impact on Studio Practice and Lifelong Learning

Nur Syahida Binti Mohd Arif

School of Media, Art & Design, UNITAR International University Tierra Crest, Jalan SS 6/3, Ss 6, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100600483>

Received: 05 June 2026; Accepted: 10 June 2026; Published: 27 June 2026

ABSTRACT

Field trips are a part of teaching tools in design education, especially in interior design, since experiential learning has a direct influence on student comprehension of spatial environments. Direct exposure to building components, construction materials, and built environments through experiential learning enables students to acquire useful knowledge that enlightens them on design principles and improves their ability to solve problems. This research aims to evaluate the interior design lecturers' perspective on educational field trips in precedent studies and the impact of it on design studio practice, especially on their lifelong learning. The study has used a mixed-methods survey to investigate the experiences, perspectives and structural issues of Malaysian design lecturers in the implementation of field trips in design studio education. The results demonstrate a sharp gap between the ideals and realities of education. The lecturers who are surveyed have a powerful, coherent opinion about the practical importance of field trips and agree that the exposure to the real world can be very important to sharpen the execution of designs ($M = 4.58$) and the gap between the abstract studio theory and the tangible projects. But 91.7% of these same lecturers are severely hampered by tight budgetary constraints, and 62.5% are stifled by inflexible administrative approval paperwork and documentation procedures. Systemic change, however, can address these challenges. By formalising field trips as part of the core curriculum map, institutions can avoid bureaucratic bottlenecks and continue to support experiential learning. At the same time, design programmes must develop strategic industry collaborations or deploy high-fidelity virtual substitutes to reduce financial limitations. Finally, it is important to protect and further develop these practical learning opportunities to prepare the next generation of interior designers with the spatial awareness, material literacy and technical skills required in a changing, internationalised industry.

Keywords: Educational field trips, precedent studies, interior design education, experiential learning, studio-based learning

INTRODUCTION

The design studio is the heart of interior design education: a course that provides an iterative, practical learning experience integrating creative, technical, and critical thinking. Field trips are a valuable pedagogical tool, offering students a personal experience with spatial design, building materials, and architecture. These experiences are meticulously planned by lecturers with some studio outcomes in mind—where to observe the right places and how to direct the students in their observations and formulate discussions, which eventually result in more informed design solutions.

The in-depth study of existing structures and interior spaces is a part of studio-based education, as is precedent study, providing students with an opportunity to have a firsthand experience of the spatial arrangement, materiality, lighting, and experience of the user. These experiences facilitate the translation of the abstract and theoretical design concepts into practical solutions that aid the active and practical learning that is emphasized

in the studio. From a lecturer's perspective, successful field trips must be strategically integrated into the curriculum. Learners can no longer afford to merely look, record, and write about design elements, but they must critically analyze them and make meaningful links back to their current studio projects.

This profound reflection is tightly connected with the functioning of human memory. The cognitive theory supports the fact that memory operates in three various phases: sensory registers, short-term working capacity, and an open-ended long-term repository ^[1]. In long-term memory, a differentiation is made between semantic memory (factual knowledge) and episodic memory (personally experienced events) ^[2], ^[3]. Episodic memory is a powerful contributor to design education, and it can be achieved through experiential field trips. Through a combination of physical exploration and observation of real architectural space, the students root abstract ideas about space in real life, making it much easier to remember and use the information in the context of the design studio. Field trips are effective pedagogical tools in design education, offering experience in visual and tactile senses. By directly experiencing historical spaces and material conditions, students will be able to gain greater degrees of observation, which far surpasses what text or video media can provide ^[4]. As a result, such visits to the field are a beneficial way of moving design literacy out of the classroom ^[5], and basing abstract ideas ^[6] on tangible experiential memory ^[7]. This makes field trips a very impactful learning experience to add to the classroom.

Problem Statement

One of the most important areas of interior design education is precedent studies, which provide students with a chance to take a closer look at what already exists in the design and learn the important lessons to implement in their projects. However, the conventional ways of carrying out these studies tend to be classroom-based research, which is not always the best way to establish the ideal learning environment. While these techniques can help, the lack of on-site and immersive experiences can hinder students' design potential. Educational field trips are a vital tool in bridging the gap between theoretical classroom knowledge and practical real-world application ^[8], ^[9]. Interior design takes place in physical spaces, and limiting students to two-dimensional visual literature or photographs restricts their three-dimensional perception and sensory engagement ^[10], ^[7]. Without physical involvement and hands-on exploratory activities, one cannot fully appreciate the complex realities of a space's scale and tactile materiality ^[11]. Thus, field trips and on-site studies form an integral part of design studio pedagogy, enabling future designers to observe the physical environment more accurately through all their senses and successfully translate abstract ideas into concrete design solutions. Design lecturers actively mediate such experiences in this context: they select the site with great care, guide analytical observation, and match the outcomes of the experience with certain studio briefs ^[4]. By engaging with the built environment firsthand, students can sharpen their spatial literacy and material awareness, enhancing the outcomes of the studio and their lifelong learning. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to assess the view of interior design lecturers on educational field trips in precedent studies, particularly in the context of their influence on the practice in the studio and lifelong learning.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the role of educational field trips in precedent studies research for interior design students.
2. To investigate how field trips influence students' performance in design studio courses, particularly in terms of spatial understanding, material selection, and design decision-making.
3. To identify challenges and limitations in integrating field trips into precedent studies within design studio education.

Research Questions

1. How does the integration of educational field trips for precedent studies impact the design studio performance of interior design students?

2. How do field trips influence students' understanding of spatial design, material application, and functionality in interior design projects?
3. What are the challenges and limitations faced by students and educators in conducting field trips for precedent studies?

Significance Of Study

Field trips are essential pedagogical instruments, which enable the students to connect with the real spatial contexts, material conditions, and architectural components. In the interior design curriculum, precedent studies are vital in influencing design thinking, problem-solving processes, and creative processes of students ^{[12], [13]}. Although most of the research has looked at how students perceive field trips, few studies have been conducted to determine how lecturers can strategically use these educational field trips to reinforce precedent studies and eventually further students' learning in the long run. This research fills this empirical gap by assessing the views of interior design lecturers on educational field trips in precedent studies, namely the effects of field trips on studio practice and lifelong learning. This study offers useful guidelines on organizing effective field trips in design studio education by drawing on the insights, experiences, and issues faced by lecturers during the implementation of these trips in line with pedagogical goals. Finally, the results will help create a balanced combination of theoretical and experiential learning. This study not only offers direct pedagogical advantages but also establishes a baseline for future research on alternative experiential learning models. In particular, the beginning of digital technologies, including virtual reality (VR) environments, and interactive documentation software can be considered new opportunities to complement physical field trips. Combining these high-tech technologies with physical field trips ^{[14], [15]} will entail a holistic learning experience being provided to the students ^[7] irrespective of their physical whereabouts. This study actively informs the design of institutional curriculum by examining the views of lecturers, enhances the structural significance of field-based learning in interior design education, and facilitates the development of innovative teaching practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Precedent Studies in Design Education

Precedent studies are described as very advanced, analytical studies of existing architectural works, juxtaposing them with shallow cut-and-paste documentation exercises ^[16]. Exploring the achievements and failures of previous projects will enable practitioners to assess the fundamental design principles and develop specific strategies to address particular spatial issues ^[17]. Instead of letting students treat precedents as passive visual aids, it turns these reviews into systematic assessments that ground objective design choices by deriving technical knowledge embedded within them ^[18]. This analytical immersion process enlarges the cognitive thinking of a designer, which eventually produces very innovative, creative work ^{[13], [19]}. Finally, the examination of these precedents can reveal the space sensitivities that are frequently missing in the typical case studies, enabling designers to develop a more in-depth perception of the way of how to create the environment that will be responsive to the behavioural patterns of the users. It has been demonstrated that systematic precedent studies enhance design outcomes by helping designers avoid previous failures, providing a foundation for innovative and creative work, and making design choices more comprehensible to other design parties ^[13].

Experiential Learning In Design Education

Experience learning is a core model in design learning, which is strongly based on the constructivist theory of John Dewey and the experience learning model proposed by David Kolb ^[20]. The theory developed by Kolb defines learning as a cyclic process where the creation of knowledge is an active process where tangible experience is transformed into reflective observations, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation ^{[5], [9]}. In interior design education, teaching is closely linked to an experiential learning framework, which models the realities of design practice and shifts students away from passive learning toward active engagement

and critical reflection ^[5]. Field trips can enhance conventional curriculum study by offering students direct, sensory experiences that cannot be mimicked in a typical studio setting ^[21], ^[22], ^[23]. Research shows that educational field trips offer three major benefits to applied arts and design students: experience of new spaces, acquisition of knowledge based on real-world spatial issues and learning in an informal environment through firsthand observation ^[21].

The incorporation of external experiences directly influences studio practice by facilitating the development of tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge includes aesthetics, insight, spatial awareness, material sensitivity, and instinctive problem-solving. Within the design studio, experiential "know-how" (tacit knowledge) is constructed by the learners themselves, supported by peer collaboration and structured lecturer feedback ^[15], but students couldn't simply rely on the lecturer's instruction, as it will be difficult to retain the information given in the long term. Thus, integrating this field trip into a design studio will be the perfect solution as a pedagogical tool to replace the traditional class setting ^[7]. By incorporating practical, field-based learning and real-world experiences into the interior architecture curriculum, students can effectively apply Kolb's experience cycle and be better prepared to integrate their theoretical concepts into physical space-based projects ^[24]. Through the implementation of experiential and problem-based learning methods, lecturers significantly enhance student engagement, promote thorough cognitive retention, and enable students to formulate and apply their knowledge to complex interior design challenges ^[20]. Experiential learning through real-world site visits is crucial for potential future interior designers, as it gives them skills to transform abstract knowledge into innovative, cultural, meaningful space ^[12]. To systematically visualize this pedagogical process within the curriculum, **Figure 1** maps Kolb's four distinct learning stages directly onto the concrete transitions between physical field trips and internal design studio layouts.

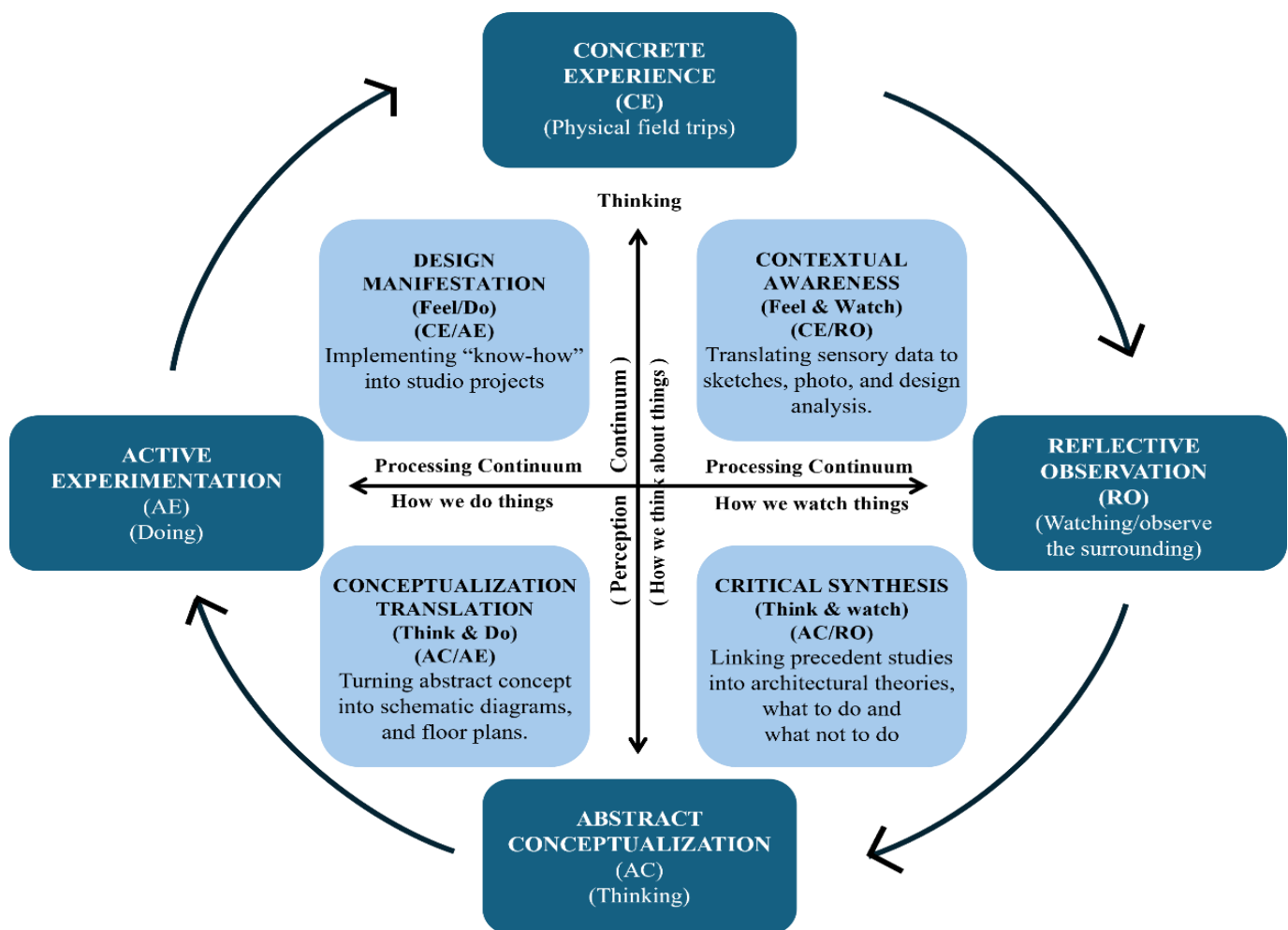


Figure 1: Conceptual framework mapping Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle to the pedagogical transitions between physical interior design field trips and studio design practice.

Field Trips As A Pedagogical Tool In Design Studio

Field trips are an important pedagogical tool in interior design studios, enriching the immersive learning experience of students. They are used as pedagogical aids to facilitate learning and interaction by students through experiential learning that facilitates knowledge and applicability to real-world situations. Academic trips and site visits are therefore still important elements of the studio-based pedagogy since they offer students incomparable first-hand experiences ^[25],^[26]. Personal experiences during field trips are important in having a better understanding of an architectural context, allowing students to hold onto the intricate relationships between projects and their locations, settings, and environment as well as the broader cultural and social aspects around them ^[4],^[26]. This active learning method makes the students immerse themselves in the built environment to learn their theories practically. These field trips are important in enabling interior design students to critically test the physical spaces with all their senses, while at the same time training them in the necessary professional skills, such as on-site measurement and spatial photography. A design studio is a project-based learning environment that is experiential. In this specialized environment, students are actively involved in the iterative design process with dynamic and interactive interactions being made in a hands-on manner ^[4],^[27].

Activities that are undertaken in a design studio are not only collaborative but also play an important role in helping students to think creatively in their design thinking ^[27]. Although the traditional design studios are usually restricted to the academic or institutional context ^[4], the incorporation of the innovative pedagogical practices has changed the studios into more engaging and successful learning spaces ^[28].

The design studio model exists on four levels that are interdependent and interrelated: a shared culture of collaboration between lecturers and students, a learning studio, an active pedagogical approach, and a sequence of learning activities ^[29]. It also produces an active knowledge-sharing environment ^[29] in which students develop critical understanding in the form of reflection-in-action ^[30]. The main goals and advantages of extracurricular learning include active outdoor activities, arousal of student interest with the help of new learning experiences, and development of increased environmental awareness ^[4],^[21]. In the context of interior design education, a study has shown that an overwhelming majority of students who studied interior design, 97.3% of students who were surveyed on the topic of field trips, considered them essential to their course since they believed that the most important information in their course could not be taught in a classroom setting only ^[31]. Going to real-life locations, students have a chance to be immersed in a space, which significantly enhances their understanding of the real-life design implementation. As a result, these on-site experiences increase the technical design literacy of students as well as enhance their understanding of the intricate interplay between interior design and how to interact within a space.

Active Learning And Cognitivism In Design Education

Active learning, as being explained in early research, is all about getting the students to think creatively and thoughtfully. This means that the students are not only memorising facts, but also they are engaged in activities that make them analyse information, compare different opinions and develop new ideas ^[32]. This learning occurs through discussions and collaborative work on a problem, which are important for developing effective critical thinking and problem-solving ^[33]. According to the constructivist and cognitive theories of learning ^[34],^[35] in this framework students can generate real meaning based upon real, contextualised experiences instead of memorising existing knowledge which has been pre-constructed ^[6],^[8],^[9]. Active methodologies, such as experiential field trips or precedent studies based on problem-solving, create a strong mental bond in the learner's working memory. This active involvement facilitates deeper cognitive processing and ensures the successful encoding of information into long-term memory ^[6],^[36]. Through these focused activities, students break down abstract ideas, justify design decisions, and synthesise complex spatial knowledge. This is consistent with the theory of sensory perception and logical reasoning must come together into a single, cohesive cognitive process. In addition, longitudinal studies reveal that problem-solving and practical application in active settings develop long term, more advanced critical thinking skills, which directly equip students to work in a variety of professional fields ^[6].

Challenges And Limitations Of Field Trips In Design Education

Field trips can be used as a pedagogical resource in design-related courses, where students can acquire spatial cognition and material sensitivity, as well as design thinking abilities, on-site ^[37]. Nonetheless, lecturers encounter many difficulties in integrating field trips in their design syllabus. Funding is one of the major obstacles since field trips typically involve accommodation, entry charges, and equipment ^[10], ^[38]. These costs may inundate institutions and students, as the student-to- educator ratio can cause significant coordination problems, and without extending the curriculum schedule, it may be impossible to manage the group of students in the field. Poor institutional support, such as the failure to appreciate the importance of field trips and insufficient time allocation in the curriculum, is an obstacle to their use ^[14], ^[38].

Safety management, liability, and the difficulty of ensuring strict discipline among students in foreign, dynamic environments are also major discouraging factors that will lead some institutions to restrict or avoid off-campus activity entirely ^[38]. Some of the students with motor disabilities or other physical impairments cannot access crucial experiential learning opportunities unless the architectural designs are modified accordingly ^[14], ^[38]. Moreover, the issues of equity and accessibility are also the major constraints. Students with varied socioeconomic statuses often experience barriers to attendance because of personal financial issues or personal obligations that are not related to academics. Low-income students might find it difficult to afford the extra course costs or purchase the field equipment required, and students with commitments to academic schedules and employment or family obligations have few options to attend long field trips ^[39].

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Data collection was performed using a survey questionnaire for interior design lecturers in higher education institutions. The survey was conducted using a mixed-methods approach to capture quantitative metrics and open-ended qualitative insights. ^[40]. This method increases the reliability of results by collecting data that can be statistically measured and analysed. The use of both closed-ended rating scales and open-ended qualitative questions also allows for data triangulation ^[41]. The quantitative data systematically identifies patterns and correlations across a dataset, while the accompanying qualitative insights provide essential context, thereby improving the interpretive reliability and accuracy of the study's ultimate results.

Samples And Populations

The studies will focus on academicians who teach design studio-based courses in higher education institutions. The final active sample was 24 lecturers (N=24). This purposive sample recognises a particular group of design lecturers who have the expertise to provide in-depth and localised pedagogical knowledge.

Instruments And Data Collection

A structured, self-administered digital questionnaire has been given to the lecturers to collect data. The instrument was divided into four big parts:

1. Demographic Profiles: Recording the highest qualification, length of teaching, and the nature of the institution.
2. Frequency of Experience: Recording the frequency of field trip organization in the past and present.
3. Pedagogical Objectives and Learning Outcomes: The use of multiple-response, select-all-that-apply checkbox boxes to outline some design studio goals (e.g., spatial awareness and interpretation of circulation) together with binary-coded operational challenges.
4. Perceptual Agreement Scales: The 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to assess agreement in the context of benefits of field trips and readiness to implement curriculum integration.

Data Analysis

The raw data has been cleaned, analysed and processed using IBM SPSS statistics software. The survey questions were categorical and ordinal, so only non-parametric statistical analyses were used. The sample was characterised with the help of descriptive frequency analyses and multiple-response dichotomy modelling (coded as 1 = Selected, 0 = Not Selected) to describe the prevalence of structural problems, including budget restrictions. Standard Deviation (SD) and Mean (M) were used to ascertain the consensus regarding the Lickert items. The significant patterns and directional correlations between ordinal variables that do not follow a normal distribution were identified with the help of the two-tailed Spearman Rank Correlation Matrix. The measure for statistical significance was rigorously upheld at $p < .05$, with notably significant trends indicated at $p < .01$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic And Operational Profile Of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic and Operational Profile of Respondents (N = 24)

Profile Variable	Category Tier	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Highest Level of Education (Q1)	Diploma	1	4.2%
	Bachelor's Degree	7	29.2%
	Master's Degree	10	41.7%
	PhD	6	25.0%
Teaching Seniority (Q2)	1–3 years	3	12.5%
	4–6 years	2	8.3%
	More than 6 years	19	79.2%
Institution Type (Q3)	College	3	12.5%
	Public School	1	4.2%
	Private University	12	50.0%
	Public University	7	29.2%
	World Class Art Academy	1	4.2%
Field Trip Incorporation (Q4)	Yes	24	100.0%
	No	0	0.0%
Frequency of field trip (Q5)	Rarely	4	16.7%
	Once a year	10	41.7%
	Every semester	10	41.7%

Table 1 presents a detailed profile of the demographics and profile of the interior design lecturers surveyed (N=24). The most common qualification among the surveyed lecturers, in terms of the academic qualification of the cohort, is Master's degrees (41.7%, $n = 10$), and the group is made up of exactly a quarter of doctoral holders (25.0%, $n = 6$). The remaining lecturers are seven persons with a Bachelor's degree and one lecturer with a Diploma, accounting for 29.2% ($n=7$) and 4.2% ($n=1$) of the total group respectively.

Most of the respondents have a strong background in teaching studio-based interior design courses and comprise 79.2% ($n = 19$) of the respondents. However, the rest of the group consists of early-career lecturers with one to three years of experience (12.5%, $n=3$), and the last 8.3% ($n=2$) comprises those with four to six years of experience.

Regarding their institutional background, the respondents are evenly split between private universities (50.0%, n = 12) and public universities (29.2%, n = 7). The remaining lecturers work in colleges (12.5%, n = 3), with only one lecturer each working in public schools and specialized art academies (4.2%, n = 1). This diverse institutional background is important to filter insights across different educational landscapes in Malaysia.

Furthermore, the data from the respondents also provides an important basis for this research. All lecturers surveyed have been carrying out field trips in their interior design curriculum. The high participation rate has a strong pedagogical weight for this research since the respondents' answers are based on real-world practice instead of merely theory.

Considering how often these field trips are held, a small group of lecturers (16.7%, n=4) rarely engages in a field trip. On the contrary, 10 (41.7%) of the lecturers have a field trip regularly on a yearly basis. The rest of the respondents are also actively including field trips in their curriculum every semester.

The high frequency of field trips (41.7% of lecturers run trips annually and another 41.7% organize them every semester) explains why the logistical barriers identified later in this study are so important. Field trips should not be thought of as isolated, occasional events; they must be fundamentally rooted in the planning of the institutional faculty. This implies that lecturers are obliged to manage complex administrative procedures and rigid financial systems that ultimately penalize academic staff trying to deliver experiential learning.

The lack of institutional awareness regarding the pedagogical value of field trips in studio-based subjects is a primary cause of this problem. Administrative bodies often misconstrue field trips as recreational activities rather than valuable experiential learning. This misunderstanding results in restrictive policies that ultimately hinder innovative studio teaching [6], [38], [39].

Objectives Of Field Trips (Multiple Response Analysis)

Table 2: Objectives of Field Trips (Q6)

Objectives of Field Trips	Responses (n)	Percent	Percent of Cases
To expose students to real-world design contexts	23	19.0%	95.8%
To improve students' spatial awareness and material selection	20	16.5%	83.3%
To enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills	20	16.5%	83.3%
To provide inspiration for studio projects	19	15.7%	79.2%
To improve students' ability to justify design decisions	19	15.7%	79.2%
To explore design impact towards human/user behaviour in space	13	10.7%	54.2%
Different cultural attributes impacting design decision	7	5.8%	29.2%
Total	121	100.0%	504.2%

The multiple-response analysis for Question 6 indicates a distinct hierarchy in the objectives of interior design lecturers while coordinating field trips (Table 2). A significant majority of lecturers (95.8%, n=23) organise field trips to expose students to real-world design contexts, acknowledging that physical engagement offers a level of spatial complexity that is unattainable in conventional studio settings. This is closely supported by the common objectives of improving spatial awareness and material selection (83.3%, n=20), confirming researcher Gomez-Lanier's claim that field trips drive the students beyond conventional limits to foster experiential learning and improve critical thinking and problem-solving abilities [5] (83.3%, n=20). While tactical design variables like project inspiration (79.2%) and design justification (79.2%) scored highly, cultural

and behavioural factors were prioritized significantly less. Only 54.2% ($n = 13$) of lecturers' target human-user behaviour, and a mere 29.2% ($n = 7$) utilize field trips to highlight different cultural attributes. This strongly suggests that interior design lecturers primarily perceive experiential learning through a technical and pragmatic perspective rather than an anthropological or cultural viewpoint.

Aspects Learned Most Effectively Through Field Trips (Q8)

Table 3: Key Learning Outcomes of Field-Based Precedent Studies (Q8)

Effective Learning Aspects	Responses (n)	Percent	Percent of Cases
Understanding spatial organization and circulation patterns	20	17.4%	83.3%
Identifying and analyzing material applications	19	16.5%	79.2%
Recognizing historical and cultural influences in design	19	16.5%	79.2%
Observing sustainability and environmental considerations	19	16.5%	79.2%
Examining technical aspects (e.g., structure, lighting, acoustics)	21	18.3%	87.5%
Experienced the actual condition/environment of space	17	14.8%	70.8%
Total	115	100.0%	479.2%

To determine where experiential learning yields the greatest educational benefit, Question 8 assessed the specific components of precedent studies that students comprehend most effectively on site (Table 3). The highest-rated category was the understanding of complex technical elements such as structural engineering, lighting, and acoustics (87.5%, $n=21$). This empirical finding provides conclusive evidence for the theory of tacit knowledge formation. The technical building systems are often abstract and challenging to communicate just by traditional classroom lectures. But going to an actual site allows students to experience these physical structures and spatial scales in a real-world context, where theoretical concepts become tangible and measurable ^[15]. The data also show that 83.3% ($n = 20$) of the lecturers agreed that field trips were highly effective in teaching spatial organization and circulation patterns. Furthermore, a large proportion (79.2%, $n = 19$) also believe that these field trips improve students' understanding of the application of materials, recognition of historical or cultural influences, and observation of environmental sustainability. While the data shows that the actual site experience scored the lowest at 70.8% ($n = 17$), this result should not be dismissed as insignificant. On the contrary, it proves that sensory immersion is a key pedagogical tool in studio-based learning, as students cannot simply imagine or visualize a physical space accurately unless they experience its scale and atmosphere firsthand.

Field Trip Challenges (Q13)

Table 4: Field Trip Challenges (Q13)

Field Trip Challenges	Responses (n)	Percent of Total Responses	Percent of Cases
Budget constraints	22	29.7%	91.7%
Logistical issues (e.g., transportation, scheduling)	20	27.0%	83.3%
Institutional policies and approvals	15	20.3%	62.5%
Safety concern (to apply insurance) & the duration of trip	15	20.3%	62.5%
Lack of student participation	2	2.7%	8.3%
Total	74	100.0%	308.3%

According to the multiple-response data regarding field trip challenges (Table 4), budget constraints are the greatest challenge, accounting for 91.7% (n=22) of the lecturers.

This result mirrors the structural funding issues of the costs associated with travel, accommodation, site entry fees and specialised field gear, which can be daunting for both the university and the students ^[14],^[38]. Logistical problems, such as transport and scheduling, are close behind at 83.3% (n=20). Institutional factors, namely rigid administrative policies and safety and insurance concerns, were rated as substantial operational obstacles equally, both mentioned by 62.5% (n=15) of the lecturers assessed. In contrast, student engagement constitutes 8.3% (n=2).

Descriptive Evaluation Of Perceptual Likert Items

Table 5: Perceptual Variable (5-Point Likert Scale)

Perceptual Variable (5-Point Likert Scale)	Min	Max	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Q7: Enhance Understanding of Precedent Studies	3	5	4.63	0.576
Q16: Support Integrating Trips if Barriers Minimized	2	5	4.63	0.770
Q9: Demonstrate Improved Design Skills	3	5	4.50	0.590
Q10: Contribute to Applying Theoretical Knowledge	3	5	4.46	0.658
Q11: Impact on Student Engagement & Participation	3	5	4.33	0.637
Q12: Better Creativity & Problem-Solving Skills	3	5	4.29	0.690
Q15: Virtual Field Trips as an Effective Alternative	1	5	2.67	1.204

Table 5 shows the descriptive data of a strong institutional consensus among interior design lecturers on the pedagogical value of physical field trips and a collective preference for real-world over digital environments.

Q7 (Enhancing understanding of precedent studies) and Q16 (Support integrating trips if barrier is minimised) had the highest overall agreement scores (M = 4.63, SD = 0.576 and M = 4.63, SD = 0.770, respectively). Lecturers perceive field trips as a powerful means to enhance students' motivation and cognitive development, as evidenced by the uniformity of scores. The high marks awarded to tangible studio outcomes clearly indicate a strong consensus. For example, lecturers strongly agreed that trips strengthen the core design skills (M = 4.50, SD = 0.590, Q9) and encourage better problem-solving skills (M = 4.29, SD = 0.690, Q12).

Moreover, data suggests that lecturers regard exposure outside the campus as a tool for linking theory with practice. This is supported by a strong average rating of M = 4.33, SD = 0.637, and Q10 on the application of classroom knowledge in real-world environments.

This high variance indicates that while some lecturers might consider digital walk-throughs a basic backup option, the majority are still very sceptical about relying solely on technology. This is further supported by research that says field trips offer essential, first-hand, sensory-based experiences that simply cannot be reproduced in a typical studio environment ^[23],^[5],^[21],^[7]. Ultimately, their work points to the need for design students to engage in field observation to gain accurate contextual insights and to fully understand new physical environments.

Inferential Statistics: Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis

Table 6: Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Q1 Education	1.000						
2. Q2 Teaching Years	.223	1.000					
3. Q5 Frequency	-.158	.117	1.000				
4. Q7 Enhance Understanding precedent studies	-.016	.165	.111	1.000			
5. Q9 Improved Design Skills	-.020	.225	.155	.636**	1.000		
6. Q10 Apply Knowledge	-.118	.038	.270	.428*	.491*	1.000	
7. Q16 Support Integrating if barrier remove	-.169	.224	-.014	.594**	.497*	.451*	1.000

To investigate the relationships between interior design lecturers' professional backgrounds, their current field trip practices, and their pedagogical attitudes toward experiential learning, a two-tailed Spearman Rank Correlation (r_s) analysis was conducted (Table 6). This non-parametric test is appropriate given the ordinal nature of the demographic brackets and the 5-point Likert scale data collected from the sample ($N = 24$).

Analysis Of Primary Empirical Findings (The "Belief And Outcome" Cluster)

The correlation matrix (Table 5) reveals a powerful, highly cohesive cluster of statistically significant positive relationships that validate the cyclical nature of *Kolb's Experiential Learning Model* within design pedagogy.

Precedent Studies and Practical Design Skills ($Q7 \times Q9$):

A significant positive correlation was identified between the belief that field trips enhance precedent study knowledge and the observation of enhanced student design skills ($r_s = .636, p < .001$). This is the strongest correlation of the whole matrix, and it means that lecturers who link field trips with the deep understanding of the concepts the most are the ones who observe the biggest improvements in the students' practical application in the design studio

Precedent Studies and Curricular Support ($Q7 \times Q16$): The strong correlation between perceived student understanding on precedent studies and educator willingness to integrate more field trips if the barrier is minimized had also been proven by the data. ($r_s = .594, p = .002$). This correlation indicates that an educator's strong belief in the learning benefits of real-world exposure drives their readiness for curriculum change.

Theory Application and Practical Execution ($Q9 \times Q10$): The research found a significant moderate-to-strong positive correlation between students' strengthened design skills and their ability to relate abstract theoretical knowledge to tangible studio output ($r_s = .491, p = .015$). This is a mathematical demonstration of how experiential learning relates closely with practical design solution.

The Curricular Integration Network ($Q16 \times Q9$ and $Q16 \times Q10$): Lecturers' explicit support for more field trips to be included in the curriculum if the barrier were removed ($Q16$) were found to be aligned with both the observation of improved design skills ($r_s = .497, p = .014$) and the student's ability to apply theoretical knowledge to design practice ($r_s = .451, p = .027$). This correlations reflects that the desire of lecturers to change the syllabus is directly influenced by the students achievements in demonstrating design skills and theoretical knowledge.

Analysis Of Secondary Findings (Precedent Study Comprehension And Theory Application)

A significant moderate positive correlation was also verified between Q7(enhancing precedent studies) and Q10(applying theory to practice) at $r_s = .428, p = .037$. This suggests that lecturers do not see field trips as mere excursions, but rather as a dual pedagogical tool that helps students' precedent studies and theory application.

Interpretation Of Demographic Factors

The key findings of this study are that no statistical significance was found between the demographics of lecturers and their pedagogical attitudes ($p > .05$).

The education level (Q1) was not significantly correlated with any of the core perception variables, with correlation coefficients near zero for precedent study enhancement ($r_s = -.016, p = .942$) studio skill improvement ($r_s = -.020, p = .925$) and curriculum integration support ($r_s = -.169, p = .429$). Similarly, no statistically significant relationships were found between seniority of teaching (Q2) and precedent comprehension ($r_s = -.165, p = .411$) design skill cultivation ($r_s = -.225, p = .289$) or the support of integrating field trips if barrier were minimized ($r_s = -.224, p = .292$).

In addition, the lack of a relationship between teaching experience and frequency of trips ($r_s = .117, p = .586$) indicates that the frequency of organizing field trips is not dependent on the lack of seniority of an educator. However, this statistical independence demonstrates that the issues raised in this study, for instance, inadequate budget (91.7%), administrative obstacles (62.5%), are the common institutional barriers that equally affect all lecturers regardless of their professional rank and length of service.

Qualitative Findings: Strategic Solutions To Operational Barriers (Q14)

Following the quantitative analysis of barriers to field trips, an open-ended thematic analysis of Question 14 was performed to capture the lecturers' specific recommendations. Their qualitative responses led to five in-depth themes for enhancing field trip implementation: (1) Financial Strategies, (2) Administrative & Institutional Support, (3) Curriculum Integration & Timeline Management, (4) Logistics & Site Selection, and (5) Collaboration & Networking. These detailed breakdowns are discussed below together with their corresponding in-situ evidence.

Theme 1: Financial Strategies (11 mentions)

Instead of relying on tight budgets within departments, respondents recommended seeking outside funding through corporate sponsorships and fundraising projects led by students. Crucially, studio master's don't have formal administrative authority, so these strategic plans need to be crystallised by the dean of the faculty. This high level of support ensures that university management is fully aware of the pedagogical impact that these field trips have on the studio module.

In-situ Evidence: *"Fund raising projects," "Apply industries sponsorships," and "Faculty should play the role to get more budget."*

Theme 2: Administrative & Institutional Support (10 mentions)

The theme emphasises the need to develop formalized institutional frameworks and improve transparent communication with upper university management. Lecturers say the only way to ensure out-of-classroom pedagogy is officially recognised is to standardise these internal channels.

In-situ Evidence: *"Lessen organizational bureaucracy," "Management support," and "Institutions should establish a structured field trip policy."*

Theme 3: Curriculum Integration & Timeline Management (9 mentions)

Most of the lecturers highly recommended formal and long-term planning at the faculty level to ensure the implementation of planned field trips. Respondents indicated that studio master's should incorporate it directly into their assessment and document it into their course planning.

In-situ Evidence: "Plan a year earlier," "Incorporate field trip as part of the assignment brief," and "Early planning."

Theme 4: Logistics & Site Selection (7 mentions)

The lecturers mentioned the practical problems of organising trips, such as finding destinations that can easily cope with large numbers of students and arranging safe and cheap transport for groups.

In-situ Evidence: "Suggest having a fix friendly site for student to pay visit every semester," and "Support on field trip budget and transport."

Theme 5: Collaboration & Networking (4 mentions)

This last theme emphasizes the importance of industry partnerships in enhancing the field trip experience. The respondents said that these collaborations provide a two-way learning experience, where students are exposed to current design trends, and industry practitioners can see what is currently being produced in the classroom. This direct involvement allows industry partners the opportunity to provide constructive feedback on curriculum relevance to constantly evolve the studio learning experience to meet real-world professional needs.

In-situ Evidence: "Establish collaborations with other institutions," and "Reach out other than institutional like industry workplace."

Suggestions For Further Study

While this study offers valuable baseline insights into the perspectives of interior design lecturers, several avenues remain open for future academic inquiry:

- **Improving survey engagement:** The use of official institutional channels provides wide access to institutions, but the serious and persistent problems of digital non-response and survey fatigue among academics are critical issues that need to be addressed. Future research should revisit the significance of traditional and physical data collection techniques rather than cold digital outreach. A good example of this approach is the seamless implementation of a mixed-mode distribution strategy combining online questionnaires with the offline administration of hardcopy questionnaires, which may greatly improve response rates from busy lecturers. It is also very strategic for future research to formalize the collaborative partnership with the Malaysian Institute of Interior Designers (MIID).
- **Triangulation with Student Perceptions and Immersive Alternatives:** Future research should compare the insights from lecturers with data gathered from design students in an empirical study to build a holistic multi-perspectival framework. Future research should specifically address the pedagogical gap between abstract digital research, virtual tools and physical site exposure. The initial results of space-planning, in which students are restricted to using only their imagination and online resources, can be compared to the subsequent design modifications that students make after experiencing a real site versus navigating high-fidelity VR or 360-degree immersive architectural tours, thus allowing for an objective measurement of student learning outcomes and spatial retention rates. Comparing these different approaches will enable researchers to verify which environment translates into actual studio achievement.

- **Longitudinal Impact on Career Readiness:** Future research should trace alumni active in the interior architecture industry to evaluate how syllabus-integrated field trips shaped their practical skills, technical competency, and overall career readiness.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the impact of experiential field trips on design studio pedagogy with particular attention to precedent studies. The finding reveal a stark conflict between educational ideals and institutional realities. The lecturers strongly and unanimously agree about the practical value of field trips and that exposure to real-world situations significantly improves the execution of design ($M = 4.58$) and helps bridge the gap between abstract theory in the studio and concrete projects ($r_s = .491$, $p = .015$) based on the data. This common belief is unaffected by across lecturer's teaching experience and institutional background and is therefore a foundational principle of design pedagogy. However, a staggering 91.7% of these same lecturers are hampered by tight budget restrictions, while 62.5% are held back by rigid administrative processes and exhausting approval paperwork. To solve these problems, universities should formally include field trips in the basic curriculum structure from the beginning, thus avoiding bureaucratic obstacles and approval time lags. Simultaneously, design programs can address funding gaps through faculty-led efforts, including obtaining formal industry sponsorships or deploying high-fidelity virtual alternatives when travel budgets are exhausted. Ultimately, preserving and enhancing these hands-on learning experiences is critical to prepare future interior designers with the spatial awareness, material literacy and technical skills required in a changing global industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to sincerely thank all the lecturers of interior design in Malaysia for sharing their ideas on how field trips are incorporated in their studio pedagogy framework. The valuable insights they have provided provide immense help in completing this research. The authors would also like to express special thanks to the institutional administrators for distributing the questionnaires to ensure a better reach to educators and to the professional colleagues who have given constructive feedback to refine this paper.

Ethical Approval Statement

Institutional ethical approval was waived for this study by the School of Media, Art & Design at Unitar International University because the research design relied strictly on non-invasive survey questionnaires administered to adult educators, posing no physical or psychological risks. Nonetheless, all participants provided explicit, voluntary informed consent before accessing the questionnaire, and all survey metrics were collected and analyzed anonymously.

Conflict Of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The quantitative and qualitative datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are not publicly deposited due to privacy considerations regarding the participating academic institutions. However, the anonymized data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable academic request.

REFERENCES

1. Atkinson, R. C., & Shiffrin, R. M. (1968). Human Memory: A Proposed System and its Control Processes. In *Psychology of Learning and Motivation* (Vol. 2, pp. 89–195). Elsevier. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-7421\(08\)60422-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-7421(08)60422-3)
2. Tulving, E., & Thomson, D. M. (1973). Encoding specificity and retrieval processes in episodic memory. <https://doi.org/10.1037/H0020071>

3. Renoult, L., & Rugg, M. (2020). An historical perspective on Endel Tulving's episodic-semantic distinction. *Neuropsychologia*.
4. Nazir, H. (2021). Educational Benefits of Study Tours for the Students of Architecture in Karachi-A Case Study. *Sir Syed University Research Journal of Engineering & Technology*.
5. Gomez-Lanier, L. (2017). The Experiential Learning Impact of International and Domestic Study Tours: Class Excursions That Are More than Field Trips.
6. Dzaïy, A. et al. (2024). The Use of Active Learning Strategies to Foster Effective Teaching in Higher Education Institutions. *Zanco Journal of Humanity Sciences*, 28(2). <https://doi.org/10.21271/zjhs.28.2.11>
7. Labib, W., & Abdelsattar, A. (2025). Examining the Impact of Construction Field Trips on Learning Outcomes: Perspectives from Structural Architecture Courses. *Education Sciences*, 15(5), 562. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15050562>
8. Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Free Press.
9. Kolb, D. A. (1984). *The Process of Experiential Learning*. Prentice-Hall.
10. Rasmussen, S. E. (1964). *Experiencing Architecture*, Second Edition (2nd ed). MIT Press.
11. Bayl-Smith, M., & Hadley, B. (2015). *Buildability: Education & practice*. Buildability: The Furture of Construction Education in Architecture Schools.
12. West Albert and Hong—Exploring the Designed Environment and Human Behavior Course to Enhance Student Competencies in Interior Design. (n.d.). GAUISUS - Scholarship on Teaching and Learning at Illinois State University. Retrieved June 1, 2026, from <https://gauisus.weebly.com/westalbert-volume5.html>
13. Yaseen, A., Waqas, M., & Mukhtar, A. (2022). Precedent Study: An Approach to Learning about Design Challenges in Architectural Studio Pedagogy. *Global Educational Studies Review*, VII(I), 395–403. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2022\(VII-I\).38](https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2022(VII-I).38)
14. Ribeiro, T., Paz, R. M., & Vasconcelos, C. (2024). Virtual Field Trips In Natural Sciences Education: Advantages, Challenges, And A Practical Application At Portugal. 349–356. <https://doi.org/10.35603/sws.iscss.2024/s08/69>
15. Venkatesh, A., & Ma, H. (2019, July 9). Tacit Learning in an Extended Interior Design Studio. *Insider Knowledge - Proceedings of the Design Research Society Learn X Design Conference 2019*. Insider Knowledge - Proceedings of the Design Research Society Learn X Design Conference 2019. <https://doi.org/10.21606/learnxdesign.2019.01028>
16. Weddle, R. (n.d.). *Precedent, Diagram, and the Activation of History*.
17. Akin, O. (2018). Case Based Instruction Strategies in Architecture. 172225 Bytes. <https://doi.org/10.1184/R1/6074009>
18. Eilouti, B. H. (2009). Design knowledge recycling using precedent-based analysis and synthesis models. *Design Studies*, 30(4), 340–368. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2009.03.001>
19. Lawson, B. (2006). *How Designers Think*. Taylor & Francis. <https://books.google.com.my/books?id=0akrBgAAQBAJ>
20. Bindal, N. (2022). Experiential Learning in Design Education: Teaching Construction and Technology through Active Experimentation in Interior and Architectural Design. *The International Journal of Design Education*. <https://doi.org/10.18848/2325-128X/CGP/V16I02/91-102>
21. Kamarudin, Z., Jalil, N. A., & Rahman, J. A. (2017). Educating Applied Arts And Design Students On Bamboo Crafts Through Educational Trip And Studio Project. 8(1).
22. Behrendt, M., & Franklin, T. L. (2014). A Review of Research on School Field Trips and Their Value in Education.
23. DeWitt, J., & Storksdieck, M. (2008). A Short Review of School Field Trips: Key Findings from the Past and Implications for the Future. *Visitor Studies*, 11(2), 181–197. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10645570802355562>
24. Morkos, M. (2025). Innovative Approaches to Enhance Teaching and Learning Techniques for Interior Architecture Modules. *The British University in Egypt*, 0(0), 0–0. <https://doi.org/10.21608/mjaf.2025.380902.3658>

25. Hope, M. (2009). The Importance of Direct Experience: A Philosophical Defence of Fieldwork in Human Geography. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 33(2), 169–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03098260802276698>
26. Mohammad Yusoff, W. F., Ja'afar, N. H., Centre for Innovative Architecture and Built Environment, Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600, Bangi, Selangor, MALAYSIA, Mohammad, N., & Centre for Innovative Architecture and Built Environment, Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600, Bangi, Selangor, MALAYSIA. (2019). Perception of Architecture Students on Factors Influencing the Selection of Locations for Academic Trip and Site Visit. *Journal of Technical Education and Training*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.30880/jtet.2019.11.03.004>
27. Emam, M., Taha, D., & ElSayad, Z. (2019). Collaborative pedagogy in architectural design studio: A case study in applying collaborative design. *Alexandria Engineering Journal*, 58(1), 163–170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aej.2018.03.005>
28. Brocato, K. (2009). Studio Based Learning: Proposing, Critiquing, Iterating Our Way to Person-Centeredness for Better Classroom Management. *Theory Into Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405840902776459>
29. Masdéu, M., & Fuses, J. (2017). Reconceptualizing The Design Studio In Architectural Education: Distance Learning And Blended Learning As Transformation Factors. *International Journal of Architectural Research: ArchNet-IJAR*, 11(2), 6. <https://doi.org/10.26687/archnet-ijar.v11i2.1156>
30. Schön, D. A. (2009). The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action. Basic Books.
31. Thakur, A., & Cai, Y. (2018). Field Trips as a Pedagogical Tool in Interior Design Education: Student Perceptions. *The International Journal of Design Education*, 12(1), 21–29. <https://doi.org/10.18848/2325-128X/CGP/v12i01/21-29>
32. Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. (1991). Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom. School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University.
33. Chickering, A. W., & Gamson, Z. F. (1991). Appendix A: Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 1991(47), 63–69. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.37219914708>
34. Piaget, J. (1970). Genetic Epistemology. Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/piag91272>
35. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Readings on the development of children (Interaction between learning and development. In M. Gauvain&M. Cole (Eds.)). Scientific American Books.
36. Chi, M. T. H. (2009). Active-Constructive-Interactive: A Conceptual Framework for Differentiating Learning Activities. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 1(1), 73–105. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-8765.2008.01005.x>
37. Batič, J. (2011). The Field Trip as Part of Spatial (Architectural) Design Art Classes. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 1(2), 73–86. <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.429>
38. Jones, J. C., & Washko, S. (2021). More than fun in the sun: The pedagogy of field trips improves student learning in higher education. *Journal of Geoscience Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10899995.2021.1984176>
39. Truong, T. N. N., & Nguyen, H. T. P. (2025). Navigating Experiential Learning: Insights From Vietnamese Architecture Students on an Educational Field Trip. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 48(1), 46–86. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10538259241248634>
40. Creswell, J. W. (20). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (3. ed., [Nachdr.]). SAGE Publ.
41. Denzin, N. K. (2012). Triangulation 2.0. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 6(2), 80–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812437186>