



A STUDY ON PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS THEORETICAL EDUCATION VERSUS PRACTICAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT:

This research specializes in the college approach in Mumbai and Suburban region among students pursuing higher education in university colleges. The research focuses on current available literature on the teaching approach and understanding the approach of institutions and professors through students. The problem with the education system is that only textual knowledge, completing assignments and learning without its relevance is given importance.

A survey has been conducted among College Students and Working professionals by using a convenience sampling method to collect primary data from where findings of the study were drawn. The first attempt of this research is to understand the perspective of the students, whether they understand the difference between theoretical and practical training. Furthermore, the researchers will understand and analyze this topic in depth based on various parameters. Researchers found that practical education was more favored by respondents. Researchers have also provided some solutions for students, professors, and colleges for implementing practical education.

KEYWORDS:

Educational approach, Curriculum design, Personality development.

INTRODUCTION:

Education is a process used to accept or impart accurate information. Future success depends on education. That is why everyone aspires to have the most basic education possible. We have access to both theoretical and practical

instruction through our educational system. We have a better future and a better life thanks to education. Education is crucial because it gives people the chance to gain knowledge and develop their talents. It strengthens the character of individual. The best comprehension of life can be obtained through proper education. The only way to develop a good generation and responsible people who can learn sound lessons and potentially spread them to many others is through education.

Every youngster up to the age of 14 was eligible for free education through government policy. The fundamental divisions of the educational system are pre-primary, primary, elementary, and secondary education, which are followed by higher education. In India, the majority of the curriculum is theoretical, emphasizing more information than knowledge. Instead of comprehending and digesting the information, the whole thing is about cramming facts. Additionally, rather than actual knowledge, exam results are used to gauge one's level of education. On the other hand, education in the United States is far more advanced in terms of learning about new technology or advancements in a variety of sectors, but in India we tend to measure and still rely on textbooks whose material is about 5–6 decades old. The emphasis of education in the United States is entirely on rational understanding and conceptual comprehension. The lecturers give lectures on a variety of topics, but they don't explain how to handle numerical problems. In India, it's not common for professors to provide examples of how to approach a particular numerical difficulty.

In today's world of globalization and increasing competition between countries, especially in the fields of business, management finance and economy there is a need for constant updates and improvement of the education system.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

In the study of **Collins and Taylor (2002)** and **Allworth (2014)** believed that undergraduate college would continue to focus on generalized knowledge. Due to this there is an increase in students pursuing post graduate degree and this resulted in recent development of many top tier colleges.

Katajavouri, Lindblom-Ylanne and Hirovonan (2006) conducted a study and stated that today's professionals should be able to continuously refresh their expertise and that this applies to any profession and is necessary to ensure its **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**. This needs to be done in order to apply knowledge gained through practical training and it needs to be updated with current knowledge and practice as this is particularly important given the advances in technology in today's world. **Katajavuori** further explained that metacognitive skills are acquired through hands-on experience. They are important throughout life and can only be acquired through hands-on knowledge and work efforts. Lifelong learning is an integral part of the profession. It has been proven and validated that hands-on learning is contextual and beneficial to students, acting as a link between theory and practice to apply their theoretical knowledge in the workplace. Formal theoretical learning is essential for expert knowledge as practical knowledge is typically learned on the job and others see the importance of integrating it into the curriculum as part of the final year of the programme.

Similarly in (1994) **Eraut** stated that only theoretical knowledge cannot prepare students to face challenges in an extremely competitive world.

According to **Hodson (1990)**, **Osbourne (1993)**, **Woolnough and Allsop (1985)** in their study, doubted the value of Practical experience and suggested that type of practical experience should be given more importance rather than just sake of it's inclusion in curriculum. Even **Piennar (2014)** stated that **Workplace - Integrated Learning (WIL)** is effective way for providing practical experience during Under-graduate degree. Previously even **Wrenn and Wrenn (2009)** discussed about relevance of **(WIL)**, but even stated that it is difficult in Medical field where life and Professional life are on stake.

Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) reported that student teachers found teaching practice as important part of their training and it also helped in reviewing theoretical knowledge. Although this study was from the perception of dental students.

Katrina Paulsson and Lisa Sundin (2000) conducted a study that examines the situation and problems by integrating web based course at work, which was done to improve employees level of satisfaction at work. This analysis revealed that employees had positive attitude towards work even when there was increasing workload. This was because of proper training and practical knowledge was provided to them.

In (2004), **Millar's** study mentioned that practical work includes interpretation of data and that learning involved in practical activity mostly occurs due to discussion, observation and measuring and interpreting them.

According to **Nicol (2010)**, feedback is important for education. Because in student centered learning environments, providing feedback is a crucial skill required by an academic teacher providing effective education.

In one the study of **Walley and Albadri (2015)** reported the impact of practical education by conductivity a survey on final year dental students in UK that due to practical experience students felt more capable of discussing inhalation sedation with patients and parents were more satisfied with quality of teaching as practical training was included in curriculum.

Mohammad and Elina highlighted a framework for measuring quality in higher education with regards to teaching aspects only. Dimensions like academic resources, competence, attitude and content where the key element is analyzed. Nowadays, social media is increasing so effective use of E-learning has a tremendous impact on education.

Pekmez, Johnson and Gott (2005) investigated the thinking of teachers regarding practical work in United Kingdom and United States of America. This study showed the 3 major movements of teachers for teaching students, (i) Discovery Learning (ii) The Process Approach (iii) Investigations.

Benner, Tanner and Chesla (1995) stated that both practical and theoretical knowledge support each other and create balance.

LITERATURE GAP:

According to the existing research and articles, practical education is the most effective kind of instruction. Few academics had previously mentioned the significance of theoretical education. Researchers want to close this gap by recognizing the advantages of both approaches rather than emphasizing practical education alone. The available studies are not focused on understanding about this topic from students and working professionals perspective in Commerce and Management field. The literature that is currently available is silent on the tools needed and the best practices for delivering an excellent education. Whether more fees are levied or not, for providing high-quality education.

NEED FOR STUDY:

According to studies, practical education equips students to take on obstacles in a highly competitive environment. Research shows that cognitive skills are developed through practical experience, are crucial throughout life, and can only be learned through practical knowledge and hard work. Practical education is the finest, to put it briefly. However, this research will help to understand the importance of practical education and why students still value it. Teaching students in both academic and practical approaches becomes crucial as a result. Prior to that, it's vital to know how respondents view both forms of education and whether they comprehend their significance.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To analyze which is more effective, theoretical or practical education.
2. To understand why universities or colleges prefer theoretical education.
3. To understand the respondent's views on the current education system followed in their respective University or Institute.
4. To identify whether only through one way the students can complete their education.
5. To understand whether students and working professionals who have study majorly through theoretical way faced difficulty in their work life.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS:

- There is more preference for practical education compared to theoretical education.
- There are major changes in the outcome in terms of academic performance and personality of student if one way of education is preferred more than other.
- There is no need to completely replace the theoretical education approach with practical education.

RESEARCH Design:

- **Sample Unit** – The sample was collected from degree college students and working professionals. Students are either pursuing Under-graduate or Postgraduate courses. Whereas working professionals are Employees in corporate.
- **Sample Size** – The Sample size is 80 responses.
- **Sample Technique** – Convenience sampling method was used for collecting primary data. There was a questionnaire prepared by researchers including a list of questions and it was circulated among students to gather information.

LIMITATIONS TO STUDY:

1. The study will be restricted to Degree College Students and Working Professionals.
2. The study will be restricted in the field of Commerce and Management.
3. The research only studies the attitude and perception towards education system.
4. The study will be restricted to Mumbai cities and Suburban region.

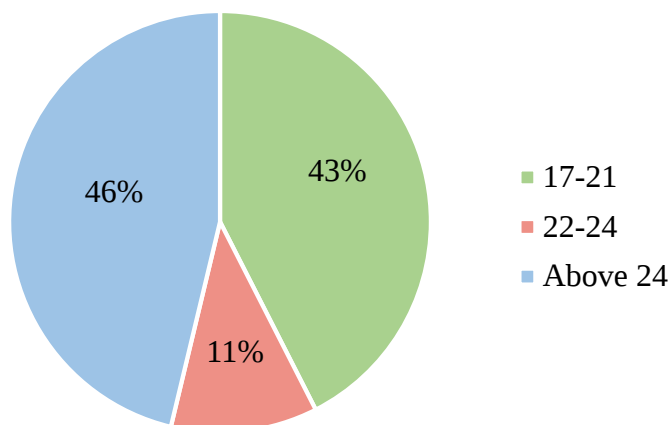
Due to these limitations, conclusion was more specific as other streams was not considered.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- **Primary Data** - First in hand data has been collected through questionnaire which was circulated among college students on online platforms (Google forms) to 80 respondents. Out of these 80 responses were considered as per their accuracy and relevance.
- **Secondary Data** - Research paper and Articles were considered to collect secondary information for study and prepare this research paper.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES – 80**

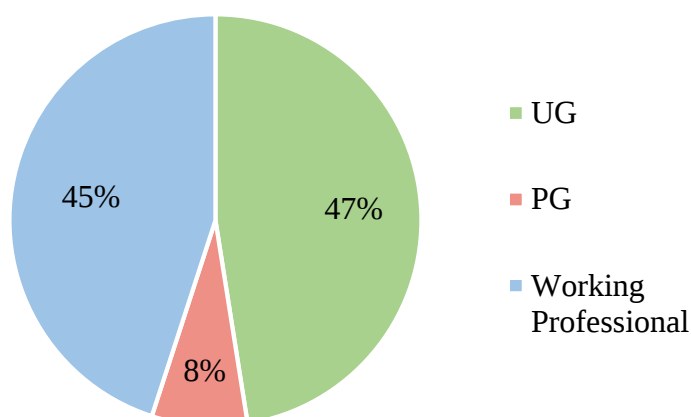
Age Group	17-21	22-24	Above 24	Total
Total	34	9	37	80

**i. INTERPRETATION:**

In the above pie diagram, from different age groups the highest numbers of belongs to age group above 24 which is (46%) followed by below 17-22 (43%) and 22-24 (11%)

2. COURSE PURSUED / PROFESSION

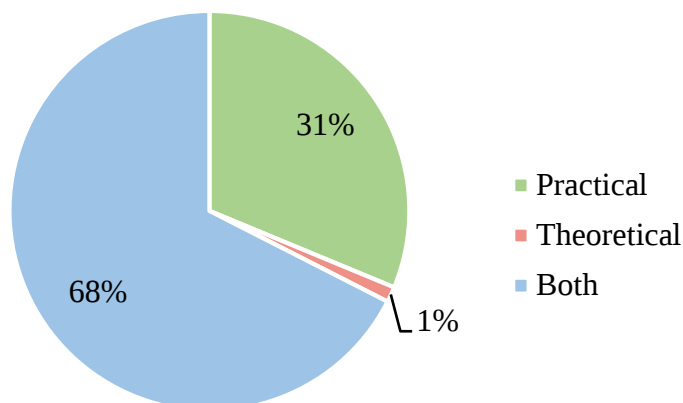
Course	UG	PG	Working Professional	Total
Total	38	6	36	80

**ii. INTERPRETATION:**

In the above pie diagram, 55% of the respondents are students, out of which 47% are under - graduate and 8% are post - graduate and the rest 45% are working professionals.

3. PREFERENCE

Preference	Practical	Theoretical	Both
Total	25	1	54

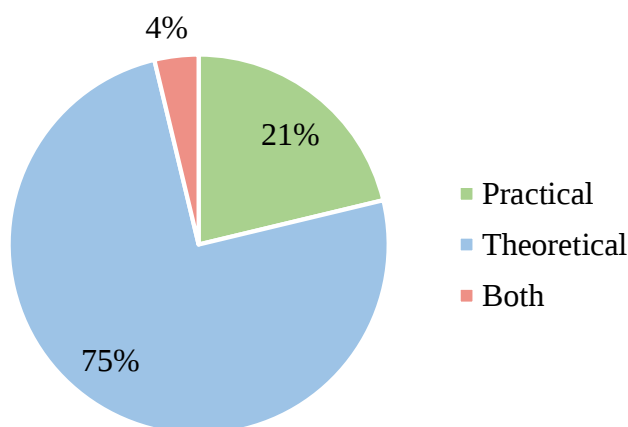


iii. INTERPRETATION:

In the above pie diagram, 68% of the respondents prefer both practical and theoretical education, whereas 31% respondents prefer practical education and only 1% respondent prefer theoretical ahead of practical.

4. VIEWS ON MOST FOLLOWED WAY OF EDUCATION IN INDIA

	Practical	Theoretical	Both	Total
Total	17	60	3	80

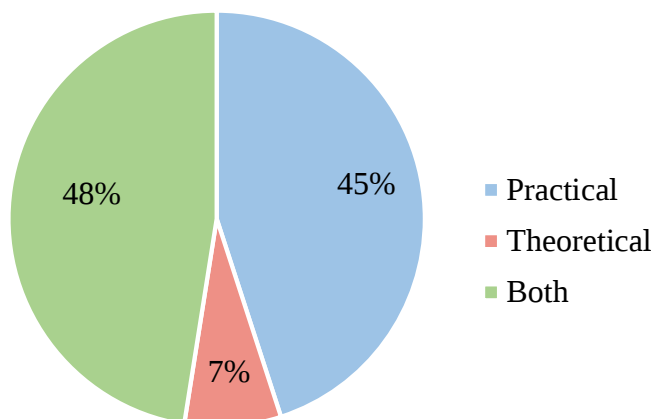


iv. INTERPRETATION:

In the above pie diagram, 75% respondents believe that theoretical education is the most followed way of education in India and 21% believe that both way of education is followed and only 4% believe that only practical education is followed. Here majority of respondents don't think that only practical education or both is followed in India.

5. VIEWS ON MOST FOLLOWED WAY OF EDUCATION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

	Practical	Theoretical	Both	Total
Total	36	6	38	80

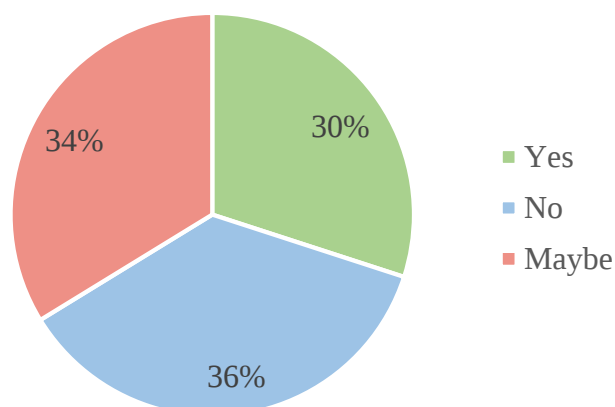


v. INTERPRETATION:

In the above pie diagram, 48% believe that both ways of education are followed in foreign countries, 45% believe that practical education is followed and 7% believe that Theoretical education is followed. Here there is slight difference between **Option: Practical Education And Both.**

6. ONLY THROUGH PRACTICAL WAY, EDUCATION CAN BE PURSUED

	Yes	No	Maybe	Total
Total	24	29	27	80

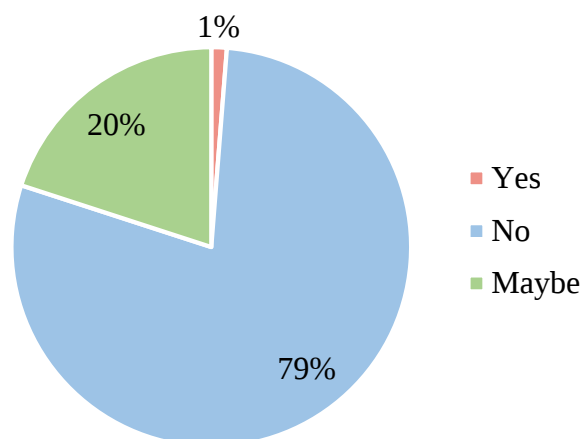


vi. INTERPRETATION:

In the above pie diagram, 36% of the respondents do not believe that only through practical way their education can be pursued, 30% of respondents believe that only through practical way their education can be pursued, and 34% people are unsure about this. Here respondents have almost equal opinion for all the options.

7. ONLY THROUGH THEORETICAL WAY, EDUCATION CAN BE PURSUED

	Yes	No	Maybe	Total
Total	1	63	16	80

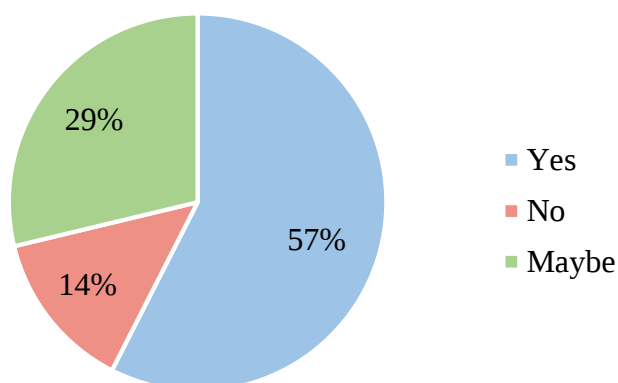


vii. INTERPRETATION:

In the above pie-diagram, 79% of respondents believe that their education cannot be completed only through theoretical education, whereas only 1% respondent agree with this statement and rest 20% respondents are unsure about it.

8. INSTITUTIONS CHARGE MORE FEES FOR PROVIDING PRACTICAL EDUCATION

More Fees	Yes	No	Maybe	Total
Total	46	11	23	80

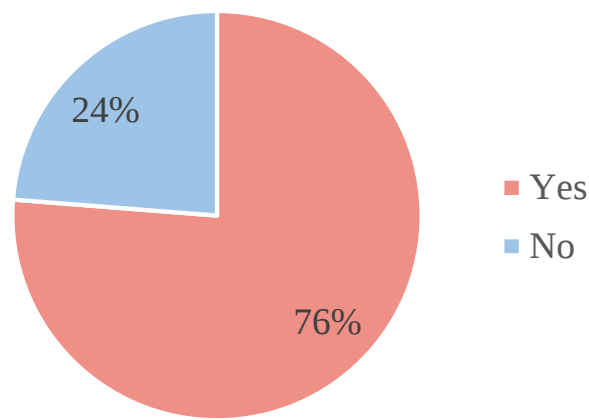


viii. INTERPRETATION:

In the above pie-diagram, 57% of respondents feel that institutions charge more fees for providing practical education, 14% don't think like this and 29% are unsure about it.

9. CURRENT EDUCATION SYSTEM DOWNGRADES STUDENTS POTENTIAL

Downgrades Potential	Yes	No	Total
Total	61	19	80

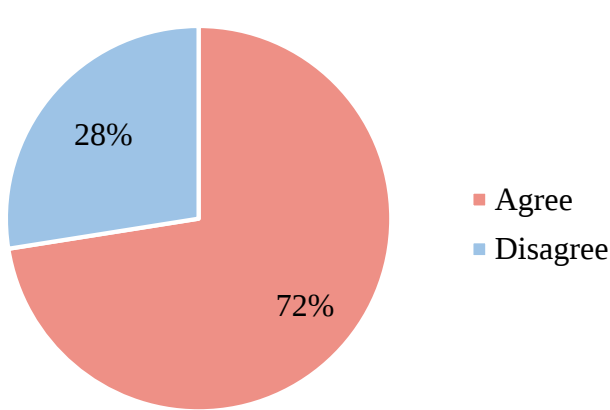


ix. INTERPRETATION:

In the above diagram, 76% of respondents believes that the current education system is downgrading student’s potential, whereas 24% disagree with this statement.

10. STILL FOLLOWING THEORETICAL APPROACH OF EDUCATION

Theoretical Approach	Agree	Disagree	Total
Total	58	22	80



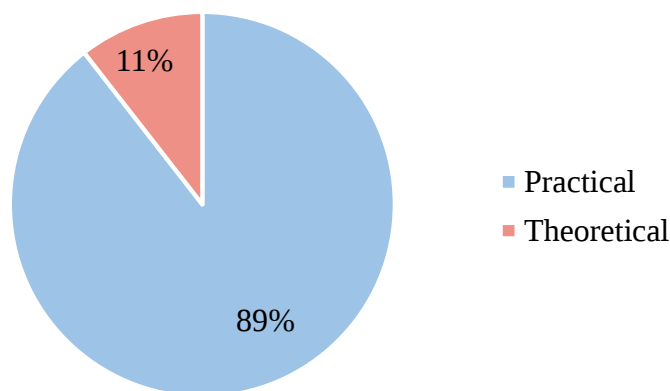
x. INTERPRETATION:

In the above diagram, 72% agree with this statement and think that even though the education system has adopted practical way of education, institutions still follow a theoretical way of education, whereas 28% disagree with this statement.

These further questions were particularly asked to working professionals and students who work along with their studies or do/have done internship, hence there are less number of respondents.

11. HELPFUL DURING WORK

More Helpful	Practical	Theoretical	Total
Total	51	6	57

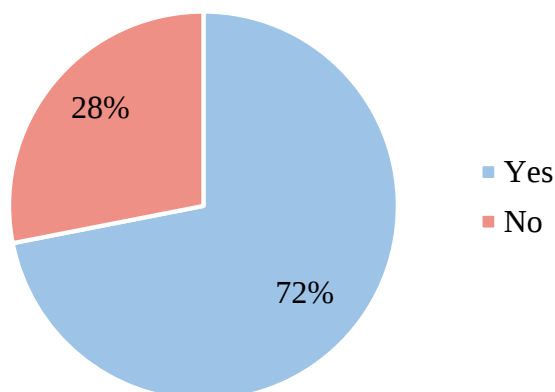


xi. INTERPRETATION:

In the above diagram, 89% working professionals think that practical education is more helpful during work as compared to theoretical education i.e 11%.

12. LACK OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO DIFFICULTY DURING WORK

Faced Difficulty	Yes	No	Total
Total	41	16	57



xii. INTERPRETATION:

In the above diagram, 72% of respondents who are working professionals faced difficulty in their work, and 28% didn't face difficulty in their work after completing their education in a theoretical way or due to lack of practical knowledge.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1. This study shows that the majority of respondents prefer a balance of theoretical and practical education.
2. A majority of respondents find practical education as an effective and convenient way of understanding concepts.
3. Majority of respondents believe that the University education system follows theoretical education because it increases the learning capacity of students.
4. Majority of respondents have a positive view on foreign education compared to their own education system.
5. Majority of respondents think that theoretical knowledge gives a base for practical work.
6. As per many respondents, only textual knowledge is not enough for completion of education, also only practical knowledge is not enough as it does not provide base for learning.
7. Many respondents believe that for providing practical exposure, competitive environment and highly qualified professors having industrial experience many top tier colleges charge high fees compared to government or non-autonomous colleges.
8. Majority of respondents feel that their University education system gives education in the wrong way and have negative perceptions towards it.
9. Majority of respondents think that institutions and colleges don't try to change the syllabus, teaching styles and patterns for evaluation and assessment.
10. Majority of respondents even feel that if young students, if they complete their education in a practical way then it can create a generation gap among them compared to those who have previously completed their education majorly in a theoretical way especially in terms of intelligence, problem solving, decision making and getting better job opportunities.
11. As per many working professionals practical education is more helpful than theoretical education during work.
12. Majority of working professionals faced difficulty due to lack of practical knowledge as they completed their education in Theoretical method.
13. Even after a dim view towards Theoretical Education, it still holds value and respondents understand the importance of it.
14. In some questions, few respondents were unsure regarding the answer about the question asked. This shows that they are not aware or don't have clarity about this topic.

SOLUTIONS:

Measures to be taken by Students:

1. Try to think rationally by developing analytical and reasoning skills.
2. Taking initiative by trying to find opportunities and getting out for learning new things in real world.
3. More importance must be given for attending seminars, doing case study, research, participating in extra curricular activities and even going for industrial visit.

Measures to be taken by Professors:

1. Giving real life examples for making students understand about the textual concept.
2. Demonstrate concepts practically in class or outside the classroom.
3. Creating activities that are skill-based for students, that can help students to think about jobs or become entrepreneurs in future.

Measures to be taken by Colleges/ University:

1. Organising events and competition so that students can apply logic and innovate new ideas.
2. If students are unable to attend seminar and industrial visits due to its charges and fees, then colleges can invite industrial/corporate experts for guidance sessions, orientation and lectures.
3. Keeping newspaper reading, internship, case studies, group discussion and projects compulsory as part of assessment and curriculum.

CONCLUSION:

The results of the study mentioned above clearly show that the theoretical approach to education is the one that Mumbai and the surrounding suburb's institutions / colleges most frequently use. The balance of both practical and theoretical education has, nevertheless, been found to be preferred by responders. Students who received primarily theoretical education will be totally reliant on what they learn in books, with no sense of how to put it into practice. Although students won't comprehend any concept's fundamentals and won't be familiar with the kinds of terms, work ethics, and discipline used in the corporate world if only practical education is used. Though, as per the result of the study practical education continues to be superior to a theoretical approach, it cannot be entirely eliminated from the curriculum.

On the contrary, a practical approach makes learning fun and simple, so students don't just attend classes to get them over with. Additionally, practical education strengthens cognitive abilities that are vital for making critical life decisions and resolving issues pertaining to finance, the economy, and society. Since practical education is more focused on writing and situation analysis than theoretical education, it outperforms the advantages of both. The focus of practical education is on enabling students to meet obstacles in a fiercely competitive environment. Student's personalities are also developed as a result of this, and their confidence is boosted because they have

knowledge of circumstances that actually occur in real life. Therefore, the educational system should focus on promoting the general personal development of students.

In this research, the solutions provided by researchers are all convenient and easy to implement if efforts are made by anyone who wants to learn or wants to make certain changes in education pattern.

If any researcher wants to do further research in this topic then bifurcation as per different courses in this field and other parameters can be done for getting better results and conclusion.

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