

**A STUDY ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' INTEREST IN
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO THE RABINDRANATH TAGORE UNIVERSITY,
HOJAI. (ASSAM)**

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ABSTRACT

Education is very essential for student's life for their own career. Students get education both from theoretical and practical knowledge and experiences. Most theoretical education depends on bookish knowledge. On the other hand in practical education, students learn by doing something and experiencing it by themselves. Both theoretical and practical education is important for students. The purpose of this paper is to explore and discuss the interest of Under Graduate students in theoretical and practical education. A survey method has been used for the study. The investigator adopted a simple percentage analysis for the present study. A statement-based questionnaire was used as a tool to collect primary data and secondary data were collected from interviews and the institution's office. The findings of the study were that students are more conscious of practical education than theoretical education. The result of the practical examination was also better than the theory examination.

Keywords: *students' interest, theoretical education, practical education.*

Introduction

In the present age general education embodies all the necessary and useful information for life. The dimensions of knowledge and science are expanding too much to allow an individual to select the necessary mental equipment from each branch of learning. The students may acquire basic and minimum information on the largest possible number of subjects through theory and practical education.

Theoretical versus practical education:

Most theory classes depend on bookish knowledge. Bookish knowledge is the totality of others' experiences. Students acquire others' experience and knowledge from theory-based classroom education. They have to see deeply into their textbook to understand the content of the subject matter. There is no practical activity for students in theory classes. They have to take the help of textbooks and teachers' lectures. In these theoretical classes, students become passive learners whereas teachers are to be active person.

On the other hand in practical education students acquire knowledge by doing something and experiencing it

by themselves. Practical classes depend on day-to-day work. Practical education help students earn the reality of life. Some educational matters can be learned through practical experience. Practical education is possible through laboratory work or various types of field-based activities and project work. Thus practical education provides opportunities to students to learn something by doing themselves.

Thus in our education system, we see there are two types of education: theoretical and practical. So our students have to gain knowledge both from theory and practical classes.

Background of the study

Theoretical education teaches reasoning techniques and theory of knowledge while practical knowledge is gained by doing things. Students' behavior and activities are considerably influenced by their interests. In this paper, the

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investigator tried to find out Under Graduate students' interest in theoretical and practical education.

Significance of the study

In the process of education students' interest is essential. The purpose of appealing to the interest of the student is to lead him to the point where he will put forth the effort to master the unsolved problems and understand the relationship of his environment. Students' interest can be measured by tapping as many likes, dislikes, and indifferent experiences of the students as possible and then making a qualitative score for the same. Thus the significance of this study is to design our education system according to the student's interests.

Objectives

- 1) To find out Under Graduate students' consciousness of theoretical education.
- 2) To find out Under Graduate students' consciousness for practical education.
- 3) To find out Under Graduate students' achievements in both theoretical and practical examinations.
- 4) To see Under Graduate students' attendance both in theory and practical education classes.

Hypotheses

1. There is no consciousness of undergraduate students for theoretical education.
2. Undergraduate students are more conscious of practical education.
3. Undergraduate students' achievement in the practical examination is better than theory examination.
4. Undergraduate students' attendance in practical education is more than in theoretical education.

Methodology

The survey method was used for this study.

Sample and Area of the study

The study was confined to two hundred and forty Under Graduate Students from six faculties (40 students from each faculty) of Science and Arts streams in Rabindranath Tagore University, Hojai (Assam)

Tool

Statement-based questionnaire used for primary data. For secondary data interviews and the institution's office records are taken.

Analysis



Table 1

Under Graduate Student's consciousness on the statement of Theoretical Education

| Statement | Agree | Disagree |
|--|-------|----------|
| Teacher's lecture in theoretical education is effective to improve student's knowledge | 30% | 70% |
| Theoretical education based on learning by doing principle. | 5% | 95% |
| Theoretical education help students for their future occupation | 20% | 80% |
| Theoretical education is sufficient for learning and experience. | 10% | 90% |
| Theoretical education can provide vocational training. | 5% | 95% |

It is observed from Table 1, that there are five statements on theoretical education, 70% Under Graduate students disagreed with the statement 'teachers lecture in theoretical education is effective to improve student's knowledge', 95% disagreed with the statement of 'theoretical education based on learning by doing principle', 80% have disagreed with the statement of 'theoretical education help students for their future occupation, 90% have disagreed with the statement of theoretical education is sufficient for learning and experience, and 95% have disagreed with the statement of 'theoretical education can provide vocational training.

Table 2

Under Graduate Student's consciousness on the statement of Practical Education

| Statements | Agree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------|
| Do you agree to take part in a tree plantation drive in your institution? | 95% | 5% |
| Students should acquire education through activities. | 80% | 20% |
| Practical education like project work, field-based activities, or laboratory work motivate students for learning. | 90% | 10% |
| Co-curricular activities are essential in education. | 80% | 20% |
| Swachh Bharat Abhiyan should be a part of Education | 90% | 10% |

It is observed from Table No. 2, that there are five statements on Practical education. Here 95% of Graduate Students agreed with the statement 'Do you agree to take part in a tree plantation drive in your institution', 80% agreed with the statement 'Students should acquire education through activities', 90% agreed with the statement of 'Practical education like project work, field-based activities or laboratory work motivate students for learning', 80% are agreed with the statement of 'Co-curricular activities are essential in education', and 90% are agreed with the statement of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan should be a part of Education'.

Table 3
Marks obtained in final examination in percentage (Theory & Practical)

| | Educa tion | Chemis try | Physics | Zoology | His tory | Econo mics |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------------|
| Theory | 60% | 65% | 66% | 70% | 60% | 50% |
| Practical (Laboratory/ Project work) | 70% | 80% | 82% | 80% | 75% | 65% |

Table 3 shows that students performance both in theory and practical examination in six subjects namely, Education, Chemistry, Physics, Zoology, History, and Economic. It is seen that all students' achievement in the practical examination is better than in the theory examination. In the subject of Education students' average percentage of achievement, in theory, is 60% and in project work is 70%, Chemistry average percentage, in theory, is 65% and 80% in practical, in Physics average percentage, in theory, is 66% and 82% in practical, in Zoology average percentage, in theory, is 70% and 80% in practical, in History average percentage is 60% in theory and 75% in project work, in Economics the average achievement percentages are 50% and 60% for theory and practical examination respectively.

Table 4

Attendance percentage of students both in theory and practical classes



| | Educa tion | Chemis try | Phy sics | Zoo logy | His tory | Econo mics |
|---|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| Theory | 75% | 80% | 80% | 80% | 75% | 75% |
| Practical (Laboratory/ Project Work) | 90% | 90% | 92% | 90% | 80% | 80% |

Table 4 shows that students attendance percentage in practical /project work is more than theory classes. It is seen that the attendance percentage of students in theory classes of Education, History, and Economics is 75% and attendance percentages of students in project work are 90%,80%, and 80% for the subjects Education, History, and Economics respectively. The attendance percentage of students in theory classes of Chemistry, Physics, and Zoology is 80% and attendance percentages of students in practical classes are 90%,92%and 90% for the subjects Chemistry, Physics, and Zoology respectively.

Findings and Interpretations

As per the need and according to the demand of the objectives of the study, the investigator collected information from both primary and secondary data in a systematic manner. After the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, the major findings of the present study are summarised as follows:

At present social and technological changes are taking place rapidly. To impart information in the classroom the teacher can no longer be the sole source. The teacher can hardly keep pace with the rapidly moving and expanding world of information. After recognizing various obstacles to classroom learning, teachers in the present age need to help pupils to continue some of their interests and expectations once they come into the classroom.

In this research, it is observed that Under Graduate students are more conscious and interested in their practical

education. It is proved by their responses relating to the statements regarding theory and practical classes. Moreover, their achievement and attendance in practical education are better than theoretical education. All hypotheses are proved in this research.

Educational implications: In our existing teaching program there is a lack of intimate relationships between teachers and students. It is unfortunate that the main emphasis is given to theoretical aspects rather than practical ones. Students' interest is more in creativity, new ideas, and experimentation which is possible through practical education. Moreover, students are conscious of practical education because they like to gain sensory experience through physical activity and manipulative skills. So importance should be given to practical education by which students observe and experience activities related to the subject matter which they are to learn. So, it is realized that emphasis should be given to practical approaches in education to bring efficiency to teaching-learning programs.

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