



WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

In this era where literacy rate in India is rapidly increasing. Education institutions majorly provide theoretical knowledge to the students thereby posing a challenge of applying it practically at the work place. It also becomes difficult task for the companies to train new employees (college graduates) regarding the organizational working. Thus work integrated learning integrates theoretical knowledge gained in an academy or an institution and practical application in the work place. Work integrated learning is not majorly practiced by all the educational institutions in India. It becomes important to know the student's perception from various disciplines about work integrated learning.

A sample size of 100 respondents were chosen, Google forms were circulated to collect the primary data amongst the UG and PG students of various disciplines.

Through the study it was found that most of the colleges are practicing work integrated learning as part of their curriculum by offering various programs like internships, industrial visits, and corporate seminars. Although there is a start yet still much needs to be done in this area.

KEY WORDS: *Work Integrated Learning, Students' perception.*

INTRODUCTION

Work Integrated Learning is the initiative taken by the universities for providing students industrial exposure. The main aim of Work Integrated Learning is to help the students to enhance the ability to acquire theoretical knowledge and apply it practically at the work place. Work Integrated Learning is not a new thing for universities but it is increasing in recent times.

The various Work Integrated Learning programs are:

- Field work: Gathering of information through observation and interviewing of subjects in the field.
- Internship: It is the work experience provided by various organizations to the students for a particular period of time.
- Corporate Seminars: It is the seminar provided to students by corporate or companies to give information relating to the corporate world. One of the way in which it can be done is by having a tie up between college and companies.
- Workshop: It is a discussion carried by group of individuals to share their knowledge and experience on a particular subject.

- Industrial Visits: During the course of education students visit industries to get the insight of the working of the industry.

Though there is a significant proof that Work Integrated Learning is benefitting majority of the students who are provided with the opportunity, it is an undeniable fact that not every college provide the opportunity for the students to take up Work Integrated Learning with their academics. It is important for all the colleges to make Work Integrated Learning as part of their curriculum as the companies expect students to be work ready.

BENEFITS OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

- To develop graduates' capabilities and enhance their communication skills, team work and leadership skills and other career development programs to gain experience in the field.
- It helps the students to understand the environment of the workplace and what is expected from them.
- It helps in integrating the theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge.
- It helps the employers in recruiting the graduates in future with minimized cost and risk.

- Work Integrated Learning helps students in experiencing diverse opportunities in learning which the students cannot experience only formal classrooms.

Work Integrated Learning should not be just limited to learning to work and ready for employment. The primary purpose of Work integrated Learning is “working to learn” and in doing so students might “learn to work”.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) refers to “a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum”. (Patrick et al., 2009, p.4).
2. The undertaking of Work Integrated learning offers student an opportunity to explore and expand on theoretical concepts encountered throughout their academic studies in real life context and application (Garnett 2012).
3. According to Heerde and Murphy [14] the inclusion of Work Integrated Learning practices into course curriculum is based on the premise that practical placements provide an opportunity for students to integrate theoretical knowledge gained through formal teaching curriculum with the informal knowledge gained through immersion in a professional context.
4. Raelin, (2010), discusses Work Integrated Learning as a framework of structured activities that occur in workplaces to prepare students to Higher Education with the required skills of employability, experience and motives to aid them in their further development once they genuinely commence employment and attune their working lives into society. Raelin, (2010), further explains that Work Integrated Learning is a medium used to involve students of Higher Education to carry out Experiential learning; the process of learning through practicum experience within their associating discipline. Experiential Learning is where students are expected to engage in meaningful and relevant work within a workplace to invoke the use of technical skills that was acquired in the classroom. Through experiential learning they adopt the technical skills that they have learnt to solve problems and undertake the means of production within the workplace. This also eases the transition from Higher Education to industry in the form of training as a prerequisite that may be necessary or required for further employment.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

We are in the age of globalization, with educational institutions still following traditional methodology of imparting education. The researchers have understood that there is a need to identify what was the perception of students of higher education towards the kind of education they were receiving. Therefore this study was conducted to understand their perceptions and identify the challenges and opportunities in this area.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study the perception of Students’ from various disciplines towards Work Integrated Learning.
- To study the opportunities and challenges in the area of Work Integrated Learning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is a research based on primary data and secondary data with proper analysis and findings. Primary data was collected by circulating Google forms to undergraduate and postgraduate students of Bangalore City. A sample of 100 respondents was considered for the study. Simple statistical tools like tables, pie charts and bar graph were used for analysis and interpretation of data.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The research paper limits its study to the students pursuing under graduation and post graduation within Bangalore City.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Study is based on the information provided by limited number of students.
- Study is limited to undergraduate and postgraduate students of Bangalore city.
- The accuracy of analysis depends on the objectivity of the respondents which could be biased.
- The finding of the study cannot be generalized to other areas of research.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table no 1 showing the gender of the respondents.

Gender	Percentage
Male	20%
Female	80%

From the above table it can be analyzed that 80% of the respondents are female and 20% of the Respondents are male. It can be inferred that majority of the respondents are female.

Chart no 1 shows the gender of the respondents

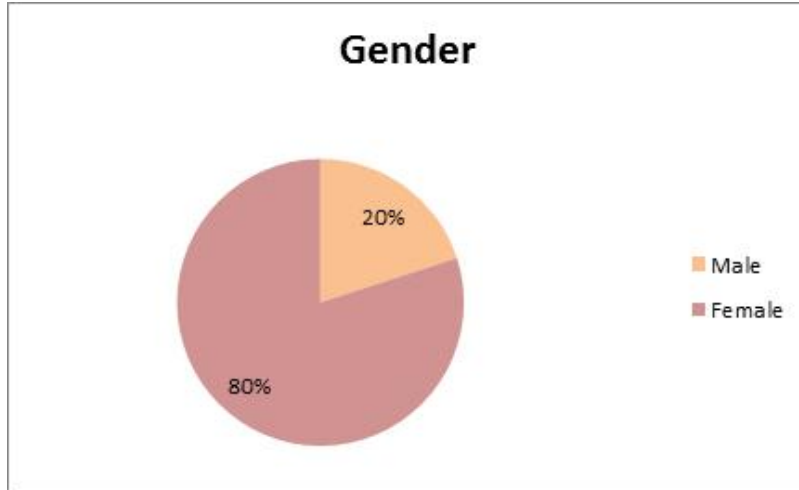


Table no 2 showing the age of respondents.

Age	Percentage
18-21	63%
22-25	34%
Above 25	3%

From the above table it can be analysed that 63% of the respondents are from the age group of 18 to 21, 34% of the students are between the age group of 22 to 25, and 3% of the respondents are above the age of 25.

It can be inferred that majority of the respondents are young Adults.

Chart no 2 shows the Age of respondents

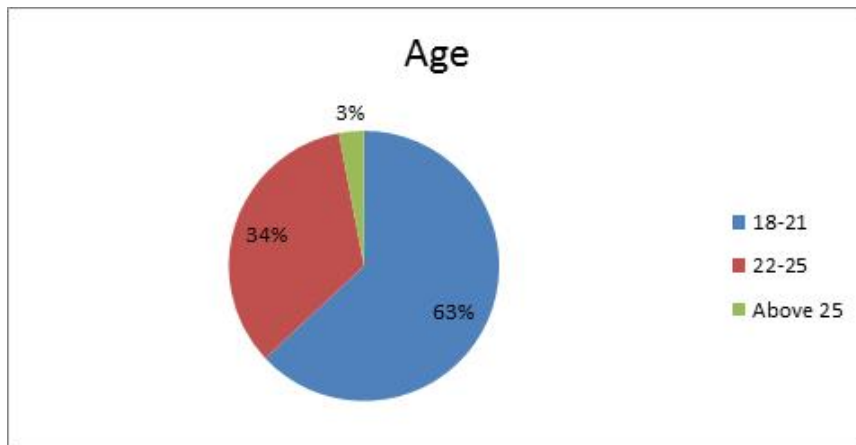


Table no 3 showing the course of respondents.

Course	Percentage
Arts	5%
Commerce	70%
Science	25%

From the above table it can be analysed that 70% of students are from Commerce stream, 25% are of from Science stream, where as remaining 5% lot is from Arts.

It can be inferred that majority of the respondents have selected commerce as their career choice

Chart no 3 showing the course of respondents.

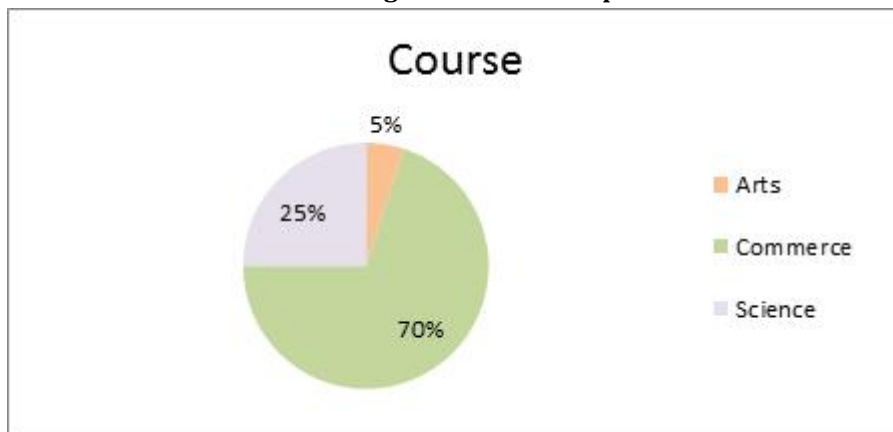


Table no 4 showing the qualification of respondents.

Qualification	Percentage
Under Graduate	54%
Post Graduate	46%

From the above table it can be analysed that the respondents are mostly of undergraduate group that is 54%, the remaining respondents are post graduate students, constituting to 46%.

It can be inferred that the respondents are pursuing their higher education.

Chart no 4 shows the qualification of the respondents.



Table no 5 showing the awareness of respondents about Work Integrated Learning.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	78%
No	22%

From the above mentioned table it is analysed that major part of the students are aware about the work integrated learning that is 78% of the students are aware of the concept work integrated learning, and the remaining 22% of the

students are not aware about the concept work integrated learning.

It can be inferred that majority of the students already have some knowledge about the work integrated learning.

Chart no 5 shows the awareness of respondents about work integrated learning.

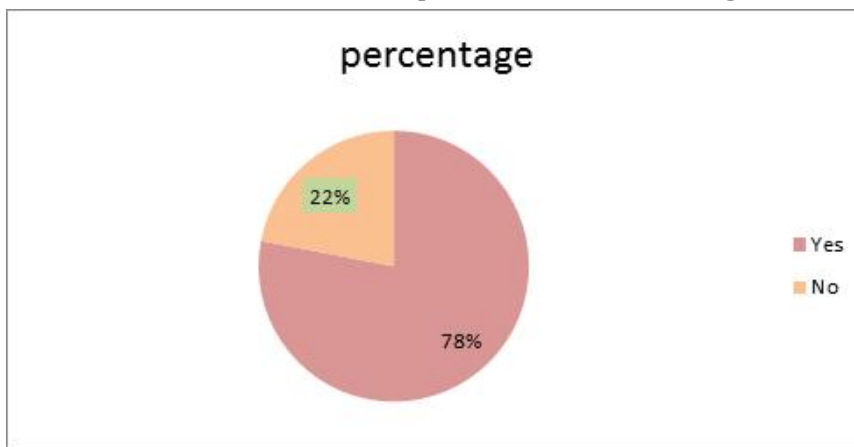


Table no 6 showing the response on importance of work integrated learning.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	66%
No	1%
May be	33%

From the above chart it is analysed that 66% of the students feel that work integrated learning is important and necessary for various reasons, 33% of the students are confused with the concept whether work integrated learning

is important or not, and the remaining 1% feel that work integrated learning is not important.

It can be inferred that majority of the students feel that work integrated learning is important because it helps them in their career.

Chart no 6 shows the response on importance of work integrated learning.

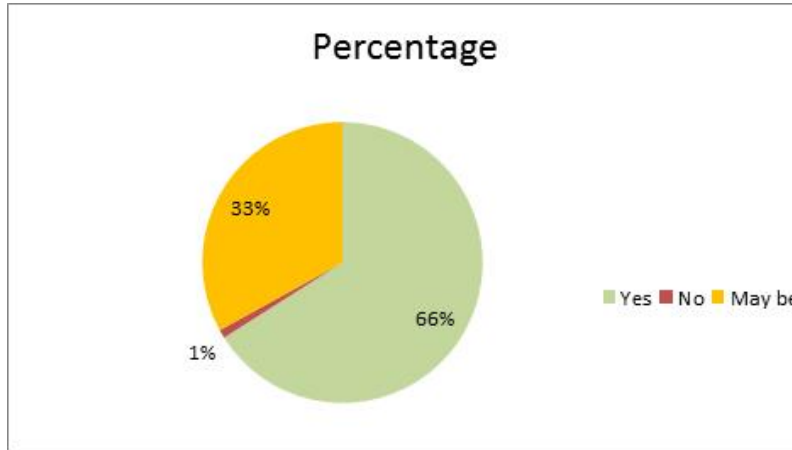


Table no 7 showing the response if the college provides any industrial exposure pertaining to academics.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	74%
No	26%

From the above table it can be analysed that 74% of the students have industrial exposure pertaining to their academics and the remaining 26% are not been provided with the industrial exposure pertaining to their academics from the college.

It can inferred that most of the colleges are focusing on the acquisition of industrial learning whereas few colleges needs to focus on this.

Chart no 7 shows the response if the college provides any industrial exposure pertaining to academics.

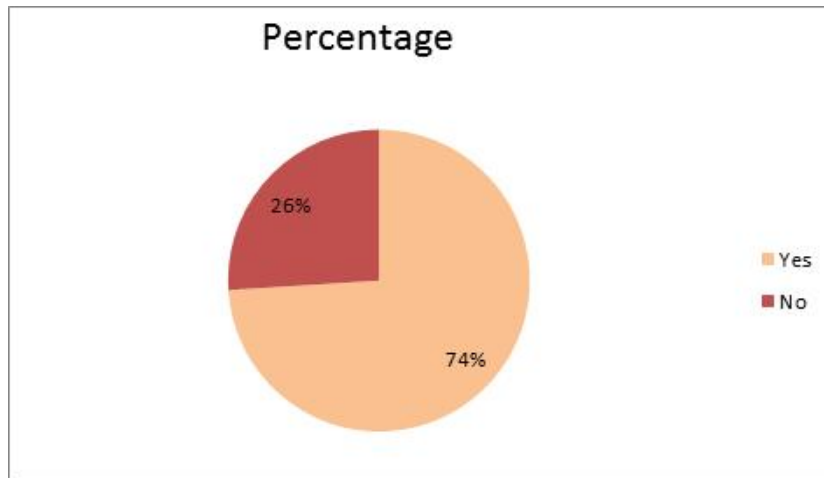


Table no 8 showing the response on what the respondents think Work Integrated Learning could bridge the gap between the possessed skills and required skills.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	69%
No	4%
May be	27%

From the above table it can analysed that 69% of the students feel that work integrated learning could bridge the gap between the possessed skills and required skills, 27% of the students are confused and do not have a clear idea as whether or not work integrated learning could bridge the gap, remaining 4% of them feel that it cannot bridge the gap between possessed skills and required skills.

It can be inferred that majority of the students feel that work integrated learning helps them in acquiring right knowledge, that is expected by an industry from the new graduates or employees.

Chart no 8 shows the response on what the respondents think Work Integrated Learning could bridge the gap between the possessed skills and required skills.

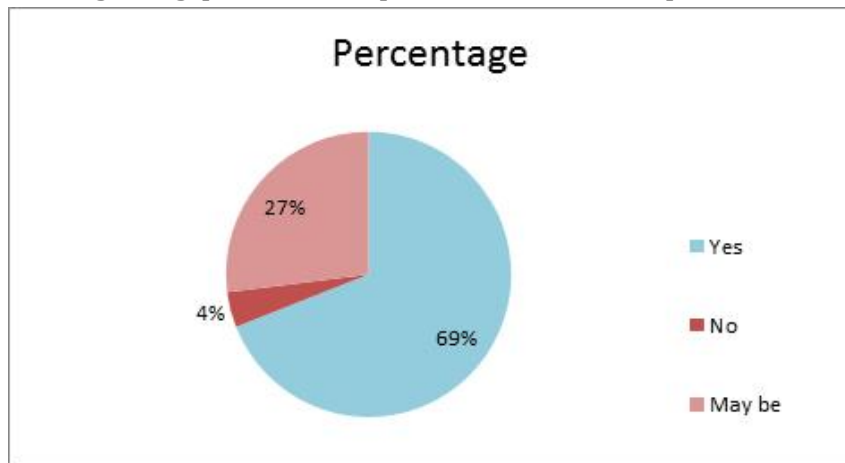


Table no 9 showing the responses on what the respondents feel Work Integrated Learning would make it easier for students to join workforce.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	95%
No	5%

From the above table it can be analysed that 95% of the students think work integrated learning makes it easier for students to join the work place and the remaining 5% thinks that work integrated learning does not help them in getting into a work place easily.

It can be inferred that 95% of the students strongly believe that work integrated learning helps them in getting into a job where as, the remaining 5% feel that it does not makes it easy to join work force due to various reasons.

Chart no 9 shows the responses on what the respondents feel Work Integrated Learning would make it easier for students to join workforce.

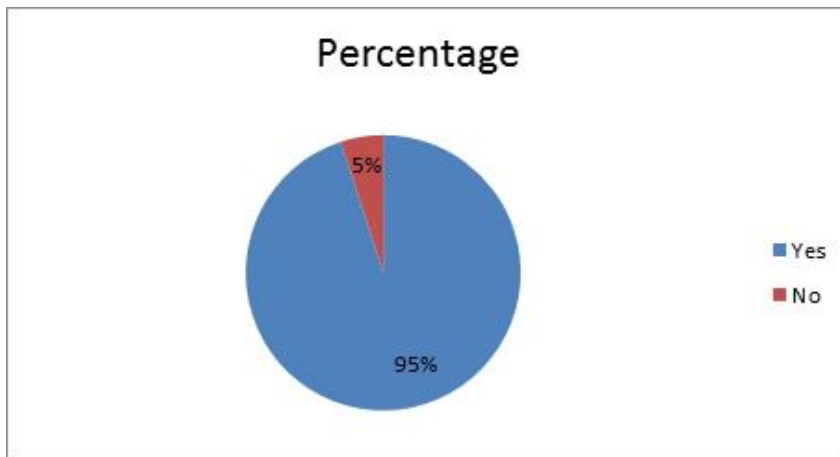


Table no 10 showing the response on If given an opportunity of work integrated learning, would the respondents opt for it.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	91%
No	9%

From the above table it can be analysed that 91% of the students are ready to opt for work integrated learning if they are provided with an opportunity because these students are aware about the benefits and importance of the work integrated learning and the other 9% of the students restrict themselves

from work integrated learning even if there is an opportunity available.

It can be inferred that majority of the students are ready to opt for work integrated learning if given an opportunity.

Chart no 10 shows the response on If given an opportunity of work integrated learning, would the respondents opt for it.

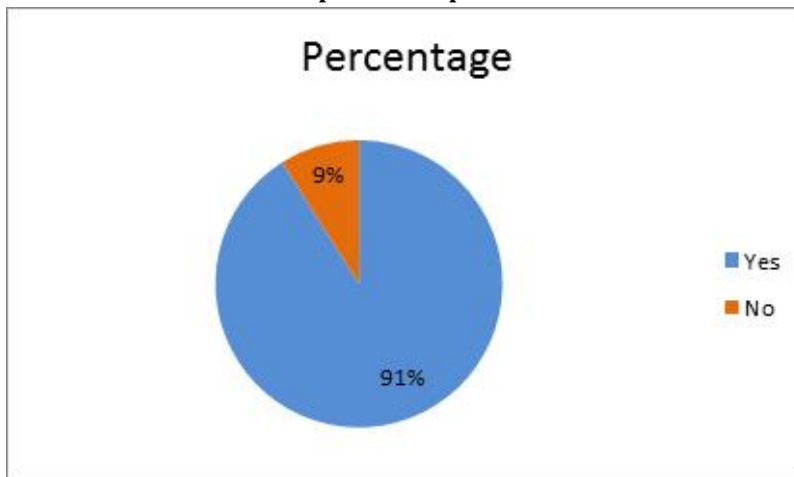


Table no 10.1 showing the responses on why the respondents wouldn't opt for work integrated learning.

Responses	Percentage
Time constraints	31%
Financial constraints	5%
Focus only on study	3%
Not interested	8%
Others	53%

From the above table it can be analysed, reason why the students would not opt for work integrated learning. 31% of the students say that they wouldn't opt because of time constraints, 8% of the students are not interested to opt for Work integrated learning, 5 % of the students face financial

problems, 3% of the students prefer to study the syllabus Rather than having industrial exposure.

It can be inferred that many students prefer time for studying and small percentage of the students also face financial problems.

Chart no 10.1 shows the responses on why the respondents wouldn't opt for work integrated learning.

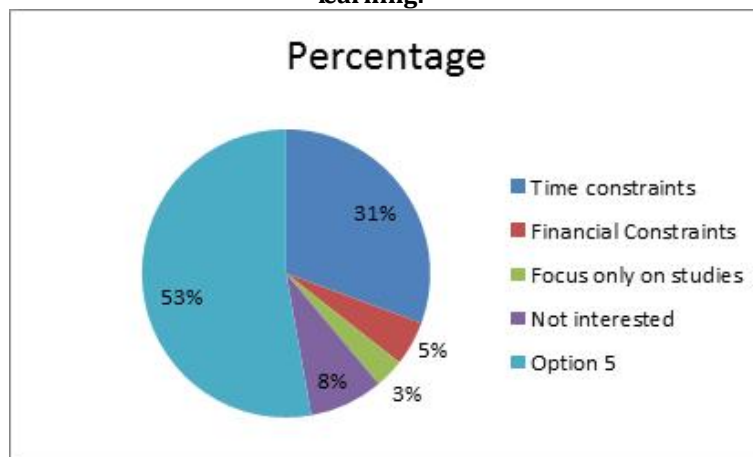


Table no 11 showing the responses on whether work integrated learning affects academic performance positively

Responses	Percentage
Yes	59%
No	7%
May be	34%

From the above table it can be analysed that 59% of the students feel Work Integrated Learning affects the academic performance positively, 34% of the students are confused whether Work Integrated Learning affects the academic performance positively or not and the remaining 7% of the students feel that it does not affect positively.

It can be inferred that majority of the students feel that Work Integrated Learning can be used to understand the academics more clearly and effectively and 7% of the students feel that it cannot be positive when used along with academics.

Chart no 11 shows responses on whether work integrated learning affects academic performance positively

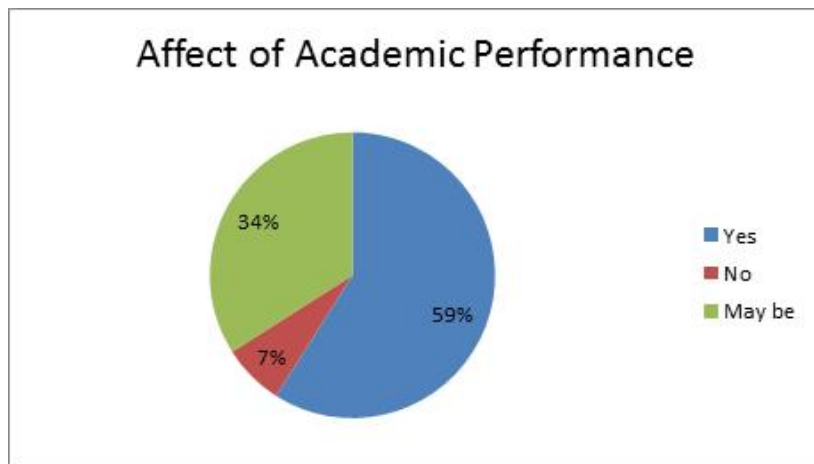


Table no 12 showing the responses based on the perspective of respondents is work integrated learning feasible to adapt by every students.

Responses	Percentage
Yes	57%
No	43%

From the above table it can be analysed that majority of the students that is 57% of the students feel that work integrated learning is feasible to adapt by all the students, and 43% of the students feel that work integrated learning cannot be adapted by all the students.

It can be inferred that majority of the students feel that work integrated learning can be adapted by all the students so as to increase the practical knowledge along with theoretical knowledge.

Chart no 12 shows the responses based on the perspective of respondents is work integrated learning feasible to adapt by every students.

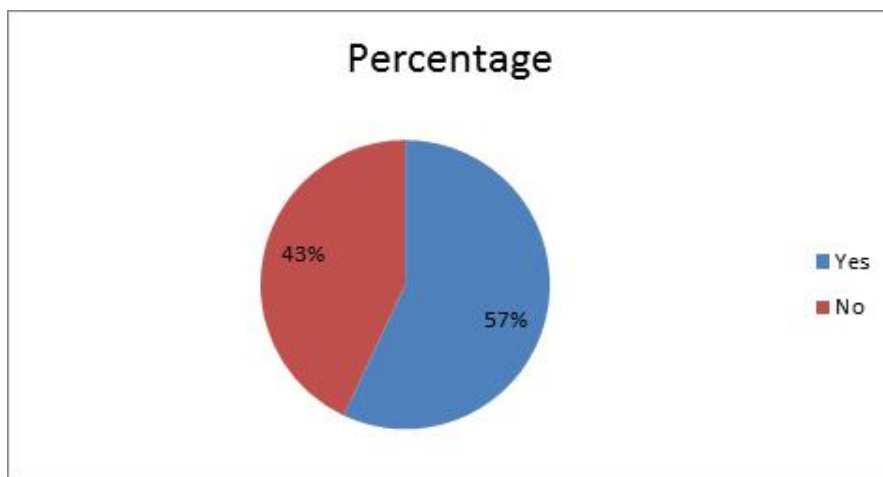


Table no 12.1 showing why work integrated learning is not feasible to adapt by every students.

Responses	Percentage
Lack of opportunities	28%
Ability of the student	23%
Interest of the student	49%

From the above table it can be analysed, the reason for student's perspective towards the non feasibility of adapting to work integrated learning. 28% of the students feel the reason as lack of opportunity, 23% of the students feel the reason as ability of the student's and the remaining 49% feel the reason as the interest of the students.

It can be inferred that many students feel that there is not enough opportunity that is available to take up work integrated learning as a part of their academics and majority of the students are not interested in choosing work integrated learning.

Chart no 12.1 shows why work integrated learning is not feasible to adapt by every students.

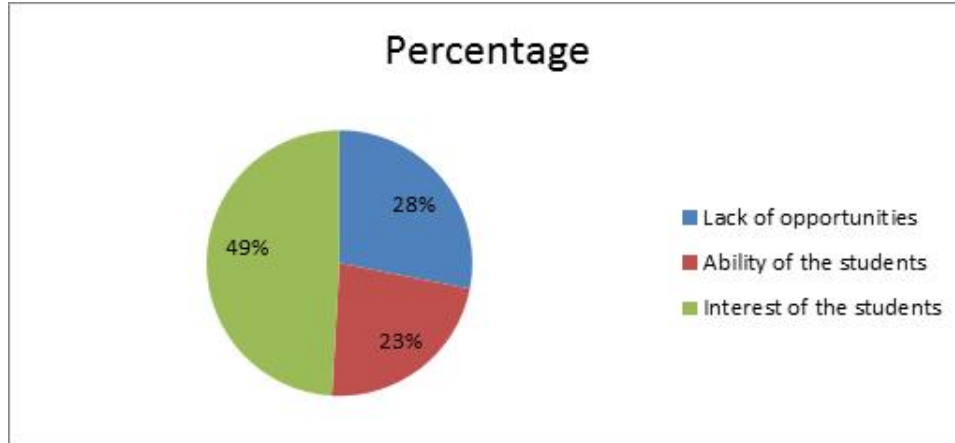


Table no. 13 showing the responses of students about the various Work Integrated Programs they have been through.

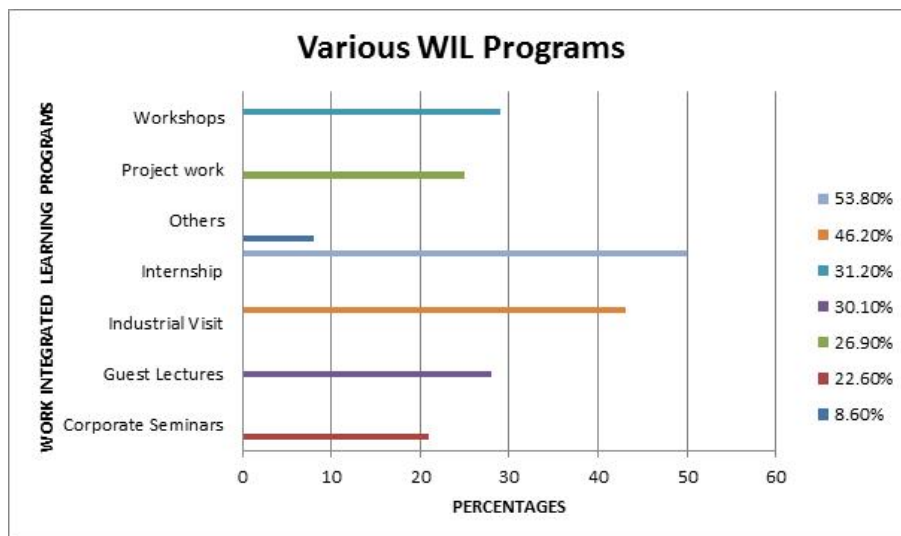
WIL Programs	Percentage
Workshops	31.2%
Project Work	26.9%
Industrial Visit	46.2%
Internship	53.8%
Guest Lectures	30.1%
Corporate Seminars	22.6%
Others	8.6%

From the above table it can be analyzed that the students have been through various programs such as 31.2% of students have been through Workshops and Guest Lectures, 26.9% of students have done Project Work as part of their Work Integrated learning, whereas students take Internship majorly

as part of work integrated learning that constitutes to 53.8%, the other programs provided by colleges are corporate seminars etc.

From the above information it can be inferred that students are provided with various Work Integrated Programs.

Chart no. 13 shows the responses of students about the various Work Integrated Programs they have been through.



FINDINGS

- It is found from the study that minor percentages of students are not aware about the concept of Work Integrated Learning.
- From the study it is found certain percentages of the students are confused about the concept of Work Integrated Learning.
- From the study it is found that not every college is focusing on providing students any industrial exposure pertaining to the academics.
- Majority of students feel that Work Integrated Learning could help in bridging the gap between possessed skills and required skills.

- From the study it is found that students strongly believe that Work Integrated Learning helps them in getting a job.
- Majority of the students are ready to opt for Work Integrated Learning if given an opportunity whereas quite a few restrict themselves because of various reasons.
- Students don't prefer Work Integrated learning because of various reasons such as financial constraints, time constraints etc.
- Majority of the students feel that Work Integrated Learning can be used to understand the academics more clearly.
- Not many students think it is easy to adapt Work Integrated Learning because of reasons such as lack of opportunities given to the students in some institutions whereas some feel it also depends upon the ability and interest of the student.

CONCLUSION

Researchers have understood the importance of Work Integrated Learning especially in the areas of higher education through this it was found that many colleges have realized the fact that the methodology of educating has to change to fall in line with modern requirements especially those of industry and students. It was also found that students felt the need to get trained on various job aspects and they desired inputs from the respective institutions. A small percentage of students were confused about the whole concept of Work Integrated Learning and therefore it places a greater burden on institutions to provide the required information.

Therefore the following suggestions have been given.

SUGGESTIONS

- As many students feel that Work Integrated Learning could help them acquire the job, the colleges should provide those enough opportunities such as internships, corporate seminars, calls for guest lecture, field work etc so as students can equip themselves to be work ready.
- Few respondents are confused about the concept thus colleges should bring about more programs such as workshops, project work so that students can make use of those.
- Academics and Work Integrated Learning programs should be balanced so that the students don't feel pressurized on either part.

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