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# Practical Learning Enhances Youth Employability and Entrepreneurial Skills

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**ABSTRACT- Education is not only about gaining knowledge from books, It is also about learning how to use that knowledge in real situations. Many young people complete their studies but still feel unprepared when they enter the workplace or think about starting a business. This gap can be reduced through practical learning. Practical learning includes internships, projects, field visits, case studies, workshops, business simulations and other activities in which students learn by doing. The present paper discusses how these experiences help young people develop communication, teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making and other skills required for employment and entrepreneurship. It also considers the role of colleges, teachers, industries and government initiatives in making practical learning more effective. The study is descriptive in nature and is based on secondary information from research articles, policy documents and reports. The paper concludes that practical learning can make education more meaningful when it is properly connected with classroom teaching and real work situations.**

**Keywords: Practical learning, youth, employability, entrepreneurship, skill development, experiential learning**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in preparing young people for their future. Students spend several years learning different subjects, theories and concepts. This knowledge is necessary, but in many cases students find it difficult to apply what they have studied when they face real workplace situations. Employers often expect fresh graduates to communicate clearly, work in teams, solve problems and complete tasks with confidence. These abilities cannot always be developed through classroom lectures alone.

Practical learning provides students with opportunities to use their knowledge in real or simulated situations. For example, a commerce student may understand marketing in a textbook, but preparing a marketing plan for a local product gives the student a chance to apply that knowledge. Similarly, preparing a budget, conducting a survey, completing an internship or managing a small college event can help students understand how work is actually carried out.

Practical learning is also important for entrepreneurship. A person who wants to start a business needs more than an idea. They must understand customers, costs, pricing, promotion, competition and risk. Activities such as preparing a business plan, meeting local entrepreneurs and running a small student project can give young people an early understanding of these responsibilities. Therefore, practical learning can support both career readiness and the ability to create self-employment opportunities.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kolb (1984), in his work on experiential learning, explained learning as a process in which experience is followed by reflection, the formation of ideas and further experimentation. This approach suggests that students learn more deeply when they are able to connect concepts with experience rather than only memorising information.

Nabi, liñán, fayolle, krueger And walmsley (2017) reviewed research on entrepreneurship education in higher education. Their review highlighted the importance of examining how teaching methods influence entrepreneurial outcomes. It also showed that the quality and form of educational activities matter when assessing the impact of entrepreneurship education.

Motta and galina (2023) conducted a systematic literature review of experiential learning in entrepreneurship education. They described experiential learning as an approach based on learning by doing and reported that it can contribute to entrepreneurial intentions and the development of entrepreneurial skills and competencies.

The national education policy (nep) 2020 gives importance to experiential learning, vocational exposure, critical thinking and skill development. It encourages education to

become more connected with practical abilities and the needs of society and the world of work.

### 1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the meaning and importance of practical learning.
- To examine how practical learning improves the employability of young people.
- To study the contribution of practical learning to entrepreneurial skills.
- To identify the role of educational institutions and industry in providing practical exposure.
- To highlight major challenges and suggest measures for improvement.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive in nature and is based on secondary data. Information has been collected from books, research articles, policy documents and relevant educational reports. The study reviews existing ideas about experiential learning, employability and entrepreneurship education. No primary survey has been conducted for this paper; therefore, the discussion is based on the available published material.

### 1. Meaning And Forms Of Practical Learning

Practical learning is a method of education in which students gain knowledge through activities, experience and direct participation. It connects theoretical understanding with real-life application. Instead of only listening to a teacher or reading a chapter, students perform tasks, observe situations, discuss problems and learn from the results.

Some common forms of practical learning are: (1) internships and on-the-job training, which allow students to understand workplace duties; (2) project work, through which students plan and complete a task; (3) case studies, which help students analyse real or realistic business situations; (4) field visits and industry visits, which provide exposure to actual work environments; (5) workshops and skill-based training, which develop specific abilities; and (6) business simulations and student enterprise activities, which allow students to practise decision-making in a safe learning environment.

## IV. HOW PRACTICAL LEARNING IMPROVES EMPLOYABILITY

### 1. Development of job-related skills

Practical activities help students understand how tasks are completed in an organisation. For example, preparing invoices, maintaining records or using spreadsheet software gives commerce students experience that may be useful in an office or accounts role.

### 2. Better communication

Presentations, group projects and interviews help students express their ideas clearly. They also learn to listen to others, ask questions and communicate professionally.

### 3. Teamwork and cooperation

Many workplace tasks are completed by groups. When students work together on projects, they learn to share duties, respect different opinions and complete common goals.

### 4. Problem-solving and decision-making

Practical tasks do not always have one fixed answer. Students may face delays, limited resources or unexpected changes. Finding a suitable solution helps them become more confident and responsible.

### 5. Confidence and work readiness

Internships, presentations and field experiences reduce hesitation about entering a professional environment. Students become familiar with workplace expectations and learn how to behave in different situations.

## V. HOW PRACTICAL LEARNING DEVELOPS ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

### 1. Identifying opportunities

Students learn to observe problems in their surroundings and think about products or services that may solve them. For example, a student may notice a need for affordable home delivery in a nearby area and explore it as a business idea.

### 2. Creativity and innovation

Preparing projects and developing products encourages students to think of new ways to meet customer needs. They learn that a business idea should offer value and not simply copy what others are doing.

### 3. Financial understanding

A small business activity can teach students how to estimate costs, set prices, prepare a simple budget and calculate profit or loss. These are important skills for managing a business responsibly.

### 4. Risk management

Business activities involve uncertainty. Through case studies and simulations, students can learn to compare options, consider possible losses and make informed decisions rather than acting without planning.

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**5. Leadership and initiative**
Organising a student enterprise or managing a project gives learners responsibility. They practise planning, assigning work, solving disagreements and taking initiative.

**6. Customer and market understanding**
Surveys, product displays and selling activities help students understand customer preferences, competition and the importance of quality and service. This makes entrepreneurship more practical and realistic.

**7. Role Of Colleges, Teachers And Industry**
Colleges can make practical learning a regular part of the curriculum rather than treating it as an activity carried out only at the end of a course. Commerce departments can include accounting exercises, market surveys, business-plan competitions, financial literacy activities and visits to banks or enterprises. Students from other subjects can also benefit from projects connected with their fields.

Teachers have an important role in guiding students before, during and after practical activities. They should explain the purpose of each task, provide feedback and encourage students to reflect on what they have learned. Simply completing an activity is not enough; students should understand what went well, what problems occurred and how they can improve.

Industries and local businesses can support colleges by offering internships, guest lectures, mentoring, live projects and workplace visits. Such partnerships help students see how classroom knowledge is used in professional life. Small businesses and start-ups can also provide useful learning experiences, especially where large-company internships are not easily available.

## VI. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING PRACTICAL LEARNING

Practical learning is valuable, but institutions may face difficulties in providing it. Some colleges have limited funds, equipment, laboratories or trained staff. In certain areas, students may have fewer opportunities to access industries and professional workplaces. Internships may also be unpaid or difficult to arrange, creating problems for students who cannot afford travel or other expenses.

Another challenge is that practical activities sometimes become formal requirements without proper learning. Students may complete a project only to obtain marks, without receiving useful feedback. There may also be a gap between the skills taught in institutions and the changing needs of employers. These issues show that practical learning needs careful planning, equal access and regular evaluation.

**1. Suggestions For Improvement**
Colleges should include practical assignments in every suitable subject and assess students on both the process and the final outcome. Institutions can develop partnerships with nearby businesses, banks, non-government organisations and start-ups. Where physical internships are difficult, virtual projects and supervised community assignments can provide additional exposure.

Students should be encouraged to take part in competitions, volunteering, student clubs and small business activities. Government and educational bodies can support skill centres, entrepreneurship cells and affordable training programmes. Practical opportunities should be accessible to students from rural and economically weaker backgrounds as well.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Practical learning helps young people move from knowing a concept to being able to use it. It develops communication, teamwork, problem-solving, confidence and workplace awareness, which are important for employability. At the same time, it encourages creativity, opportunity recognition, financial understanding and decision-making, which are useful for entrepreneurship. However, these benefits do not arise automatically. Practical activities must be meaningful, properly guided and connected with real situations. Colleges, teachers, industries and policymakers all have a role in creating such opportunities. A balanced education that combines classroom knowledge with practical experience can prepare young people not only to seek jobs but also to create opportunities for themselves and others.

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