



A Study On The Use Of Industrial Visits To Enhance Learning In Self-Finance Courses.

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Abstract

Self-finance courses are considered to be career-oriented and a big hit in the current education scenario. The demand for these courses rises due to the variety of specializations provided as per the needs of the students. Courses like BAF, BMS, BBI, BFM, etc. have a vast and complex syllabus. Colleges need to provide quality education and be able to keep up with the demands of the curriculum. Industrial visits are a link between students and industries. Hence, it is essential for students to have a positive outlook towards them. The current paper determines the extent of benefits students have gained through these visits so as to decide the next step in learning. Based on the results, it can be said that the majority of the students have gained positive experiences during industrial visits that have helped them in various aspects of their educational journey. Students believe that these visits enhance learning and should be made mandatory.

Key Words: Industrial Visits, Self-Finance Courses, Practical Experience

Introduction

In this competitive world, different and innovative approaches to learning have become the need of the hour. Providing only theoretical knowledge in classrooms is not sufficient for the overall development of the students especially in the case of self-finance courses. Hands-on experience is a must in supplementing classroom learning and this is where industrial visits come into the picture. The aim is not to replace the traditional methods of learning but to modify the pedagogies to provide better exposure. Educational institutions strive to impart quality content to the students to prepare them to face the challenges and demands in their professional careers in the future. Degrees/diplomas are vital but practical work provides an edge while applying for jobs. For this reason, selecting the right industries relevant to the subject specialisation is also important. Industrial visits help students to visualise better what they have already learnt by comparing it to real-life situations. It also assists in providing further clarity on content that is difficult to understand in

a classroom setting. Industrial visits move the focus to student-based learning where each individual is responsible for creating their own knowledge by observing the various operations around them.

The current research paper aims to understand the degree of impact industrial visits have on the students and how they respond to these new experiences. Every person perceives things differently and the study attempts to determine how beneficial industrial visits can be and where institutions are lacking while planning these tours. It also takes into consideration the feedback given by the learners based on various parameters like skill enhancement, theorypractical connection, engagement level, etc. Based on the responses to the survey, it can be concluded that industrial visits need to be an integral part of education as it includes visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning. Students also acknowledged that industrial visits are a necessity in the current education system. Some suggestions regarding improvement in the planning and execution of the visit are also included in the paper.

Review of Literature

- Role of industrial visits in enhancing learning quality of commerce and business students¹ explained the significance of industrial visits in the curriculum. It specifically focused on students pursuing B.Com and BBA from Delhi School of Professional Studies and Research. The results of the survey showed that three-fifth of the students believed that industrial visits brought clarity to managerial concepts. It stated that role of basic education via classroom study can never be denied but periodical industrial visits can facilitate better learning by ensuring practical exposure and real-life industry experience. The researcher also provided scope for further study across different streams and courses and suggested further use of sophisticated tools and different stakeholders.
- Impact of industrial visit towards hotel management students² explains the impact of industrial visits on hotel management students. The objective was to determine whether the visits would increase students' interest in joining the industry and the overall attitude of the students regarding the visit. Students of hotel management course from a private university in Punjab were the respondents. The study concluded that students mainly had a positive response towards industrial visits and believed that they helped in career advancement. Hence, they should be made mandatory in the curriculum.
- Role of industrial visit and seminars in management curriculum³ carried out an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of industrial visits and seminars. It listed the expected learning outcomes like understanding the processes, safety precautions, and inputs and outputs. The paper was based on secondary data and concluded that industrial visits and seminars played a crucial role in learning. It also provided opportunities for improvement that focused on staff co-operation and efforts.

Objectives of the study

- To understand the extent of benefits received by students from industrial visits.
- To ascertain the role industrial visits play in bridging the gaps between theoretical and practical knowledge.
- To determine that the information gained from industrial visits is long-lasting.
- To understand that industrial visits enhance interpersonal skills of the students.
- To establish that industrial visits also inculcate values among students in addition to conceptual knowledge.

Research Methodology

1. Sample type and size

The sample type consists of students of self-finance courses of three colleges — Nirmala Memorial Foundation College of Commerce & Science, Thakur College of Science and Commerce, L.S. Raheja College of Arts & Commerce. The sample size is 137 students.

2. Source of data

A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data with the help of Google forms. No secondary data was used.

3. Sampling method

The current paper uses the random sampling method so as to be able to collect a wide variety of data.

4. Data Collection

The survey consisted mainly of close ended questions. Two open ended questions were asked to give the students an opportunity to express their opinion and give additional feedback.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

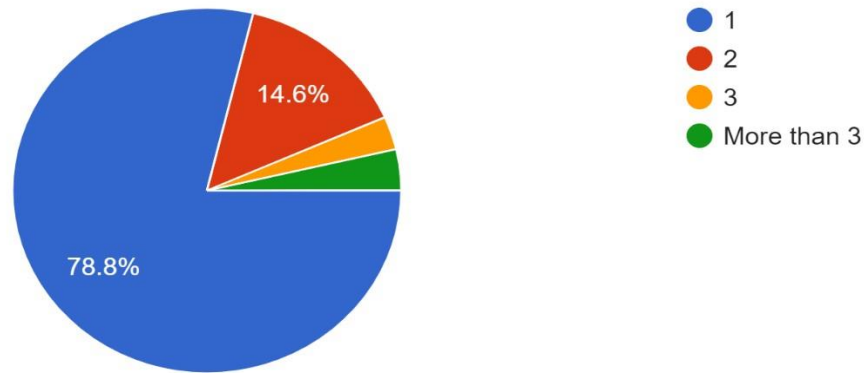
In this paper, the responses to the questionnaire that were collected from the students have been analysed in the form of pie charts and bar graphs. The questions were prepared to understand whether students benefitted from industrial visits and if they did, then to what extent and in what kind of ways.

The following observations were made based on the survey:

1. Students have been on at least 1 industrial visit and 78.8% of the students fall under this category. 14.6% students have been on 2 visits, 3.6% have been on more than 3, while 2.9% students have been a part of 3 industrial visits.

1. How many Industrial Visits have you been on?

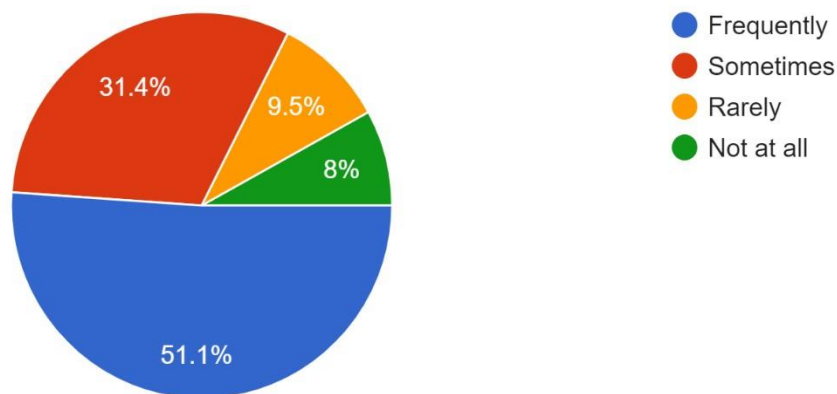
137 responses



2. Industries like Navneet Publications, Kokuyo Camlin, Tata Steel, HP Adhesives, RBI Museum, Parle G, Amul Dairy and many more were visited. There were also longer industrial visits to places like Gujarat, Mahabaleshwar, Himachal Pradesh, etc.

3. How often did you get an opportunity to ask questions during the visits?

137 responses

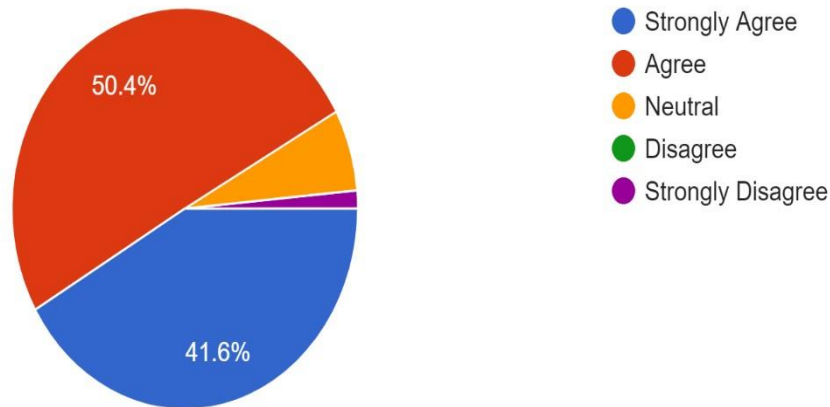


3. 51.1% students had the opportunity to ask questions frequently during the visit, while 31.4% mentioned that they could only do so sometimes. 9.5% rarely got the chance and unfortunately, 8% students could not ask questions at all.

Note: It has to be taken into account that many students have been on more than 1 visit so there are chances that the individual experiences may have differed, but since they could only choose one option the most relevant one was chosen.

4. Industrial Visits help in connecting practical knowledge with theoretical concepts.

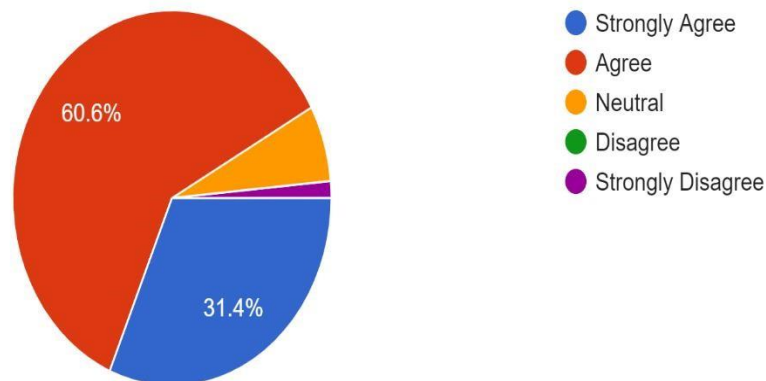
137 responses



4. Majority of the students believe that industrial visits help in connecting practical and theoretical knowledge. Hence, 50.4% agreed and 41.6% students strongly agreed to this statement. 6.6% remained neutral and 1.5% strongly disagreed with it.

5. Industrial Visits provide clarity on challenging topics by filling the gaps in the knowledge.

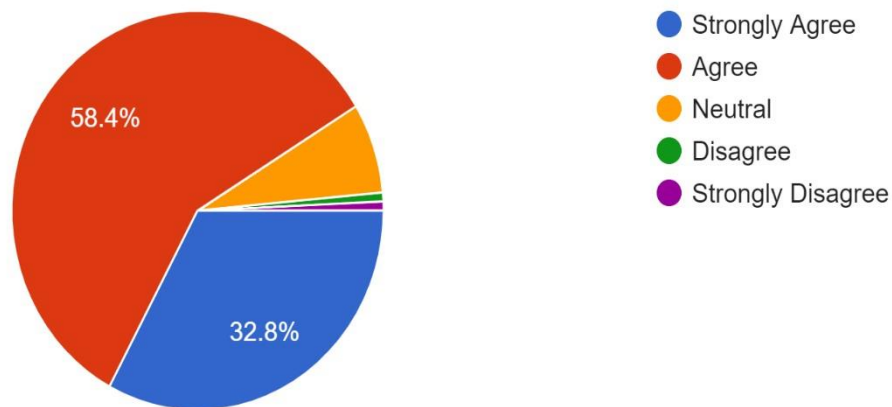
137 responses



5. Certain topics can be confusing when only explained in the theoretical sense, so there remains a gap in the knowledge of the learners. Therefore, students were asked if industrial visits can fill up this gap due to the practical factor and maximum students acknowledged that they did. 60.6% agreed and 31.4% strongly agreed to this statement. 6.6% students chose to remain neutral and the rest 1.5% students strongly disagreed with it.

6. Industrial Visits provide avenues to improve interpersonal skills.

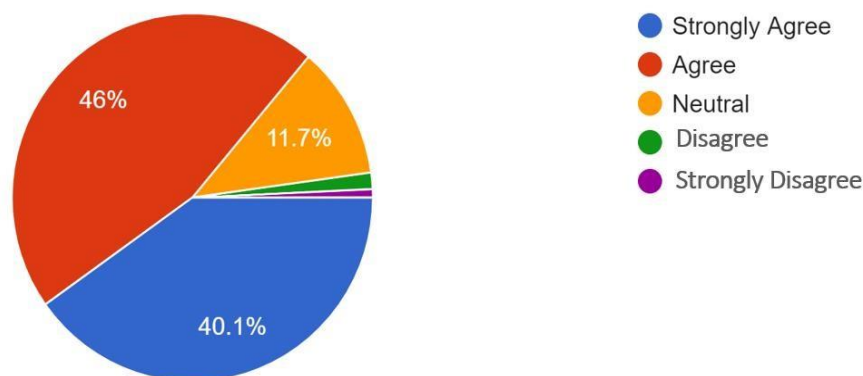
137 responses



6. Students interact with skilled and unskilled employees in the industries in an attempt to satisfy their curiosity about the workings of the company, so they were asked if this helps to improve their interpersonal skills. 58.4% agreed and 32.8% strongly agreed to it making the majority of the response a positive one. 7.3% remained neutral while disagreed and strongly disagreed were both 0.7%.

7. Industrial Visits help in retaining information for a longer period of time.

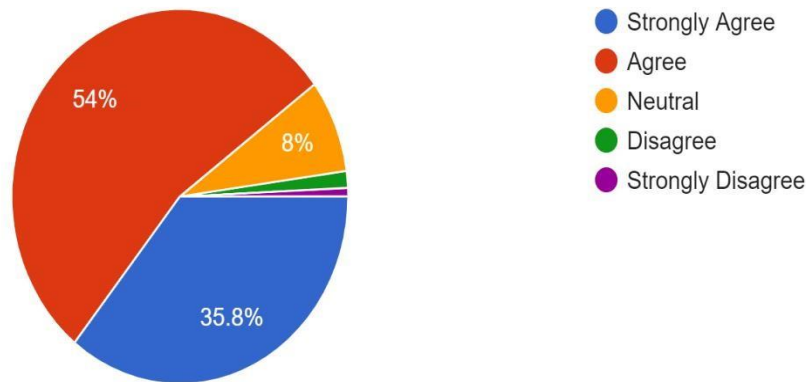
137 responses



7. Due to the practical nature of industrial visits, retention of information is longer. 46% students acknowledged this fact by agreeing to it and 40.1% strongly agreed to it. 11.7% students were neutral, while 1.5% disagreed and 0.7% strongly disagreed.

8. Industrial Visits give an insight into the best management practices of the institutions.

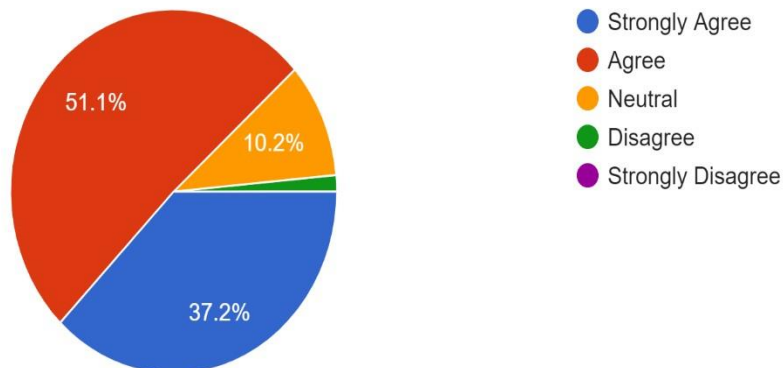
137 responses



8. 54% students agreed and 35.8% strongly agreed that they received an insight into the best management practices of the industries. 8% of students remained neutral while 1.5% and 0.7% chose disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

9. Industrial visits inculcate values amongst students like dignity of labour, professionalism, punctuality, etc.

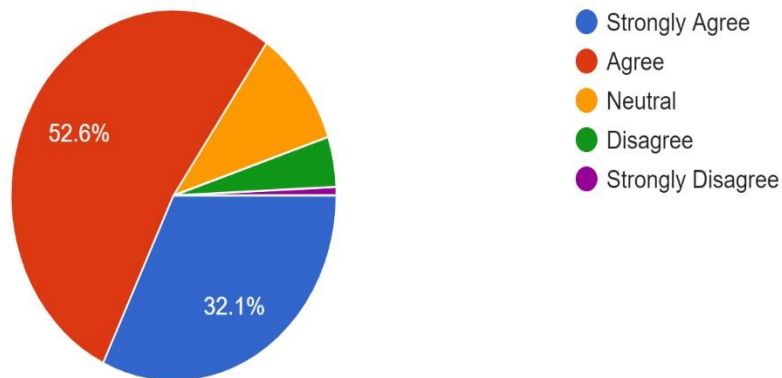
137 responses



9. In addition to content knowledge, morals and values play a very important role in student and professional life. It is vital to learn how to conduct oneself in formal settings. 51.1% agreed and 37.2% students strongly agreed that industrial visits teach the importance of values like punctuality, dignity of labour, etc. 10.2% were neutral on this topic, while 1.5% people disagreed with the statement.

10. Industrial visits break the monotony through means of interactive learning and hands-on experience.

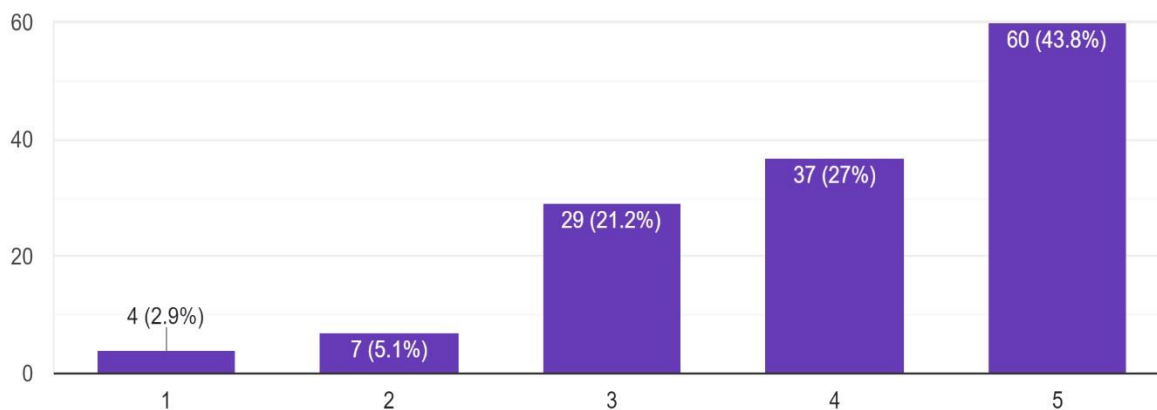
137 responses



10. Classroom lectures can get boring and teacher-oriented from time to time, so in order to break the monotony, a learner-centred approach is necessary in the form of interactive learning. This has been acknowledged by the majority of the students as 52.6% have agreed and 32.1% have strongly agreed to it. 10.2% students were neutral regarding this and 4.4% and 0.7% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

11. How beneficial are industrial visits? Rate your overall experience with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

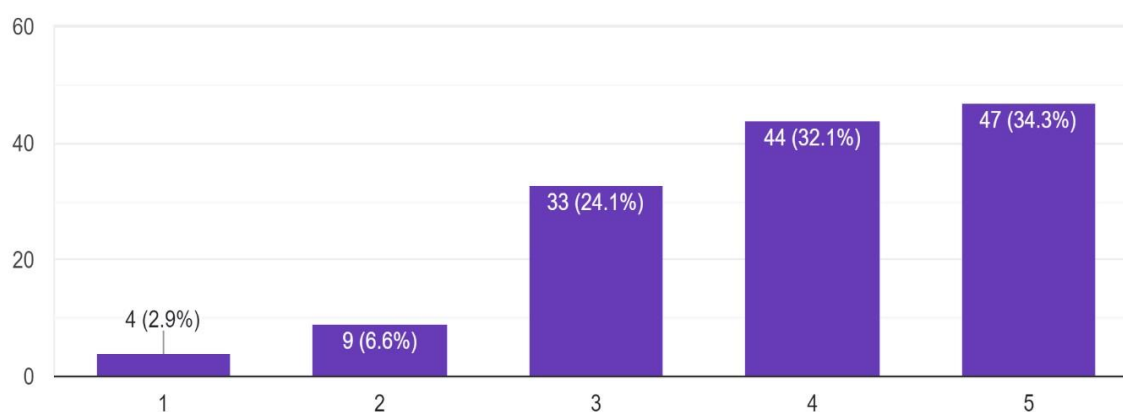
137 responses



11. Majority of the students are of the opinion that industrial visits are extremely beneficial. 43.8% and 27% of the students have given a rating of 5 and 4 which are the highest ratings. 21.2% have given a rating of 3 which can mean that the visits have their pros and cons or that certain visits benefitted them while others did not. 5.1% and 2.9% have given a low rating of 2 and 1 respectively, so they believe that industrial visits are of no use in the curriculum.

12. How relevant was the information you gained with reference to your subject specialization? 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

137 responses



12. The students were asked to give any additional opinions if they had any. Many of them who responded to this question, were in favour of industrial visits. Some expressed the opinion that colleges should have regular industrial visits depending on the topics taught in class to maintain a theory-practical connect. Others mentioned that they learnt a lot from the employees by interacting with them and attempting to understand the processes and work culture. Students also said that it made learning fun, broadened their thinking and helped them remember information better. However, there were a few negative opinions where students pointed out that certain industrial visits were expensive, but these kinds of feedback were limited.

13. Merely taking students on industrial visits is not enough. The chosen industries need to be able to offer information that is relevant to the subject specialization chosen by the students in order to form a connection and build up on their existing knowledge. 34.3% and 32.1% students gave 5 and 4 ratings indicating that the visits had relevance. 24.1% students chose a middle ground stating that there may or may not be relevance. 6.6% and 2.9% students gave a low rating of 2 and 1 stating that their visit did not help them with their subject specialization.

Limitations of the Research

The main limitation of the research is time constraint. Due to busy schedules of the researcher and respondents, it was difficult to spend sufficient time in collecting the data. The sample size is comparatively smaller given the number of students pursuing self-finance courses. The experiences of students from 3 different colleges cannot be determined on the basis of 137 responses. Also, there aren't many research papers on the topic. The ones that are available focus on the Science stream.

Another issue is that students who have been on more than one visit may have had different experiences in each one, whereas the questionnaire gave the only one choice, so it would have been tough for them to select an answer.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research paper has attempted to establish the usefulness of industrial visits in the current curriculum of self-finance courses. There were a variety of views given by students, but the majority of them acknowledged that industrial visits played an important role in their holistic development. The benefits reaped by the students weren't limited to the assigned syllabus, but they also learnt about the work environment and pressures faced by the employees. It helped them understand how they would need to groom themselves in order to adapt to their future workplace requirements. Since self-finance courses are tailored to meet the career needs of the students, they believe that additional knowledge in the form of industrial visits is vital. Hence, such visits should be held every semester as per their specialization. Results show that industrial visits helped the students in many ways by clearing tough concepts, providing hand-on experiences, breaking the monotony of traditional classroom approach, making learning more interactive which led to improved memory and retention abilities. The bottom-line is that industrial visits cannot replace classroom learning but it can definitely enhance the quality of education in self-finance courses.

Some recommendations while planning and executing industrial visits are as follows:

1. Firstly, the fact that there were some students who thought industrial visits were not helpful cannot be ignored and attempts should be made to understand their mindset and thought process behind this opinion. Proper action should be taken and encouragement should be provided to them in order to change their thinking.
2. Since self-finance courses are not provided aid from the universities, students would have to bear the cost of industrial visits by themselves, which may lead to them feeling negatively about going on the visits. Hence, colleges can allocate funds for these visits and take students free of charge or give substantial discounts to encourage more participation. Nirmala Memorial Foundation College of Commerce and Science already follows the practice of free of cost industrial visits in the cases of industries that are within the city. So, the number of participants is high. Other colleges can follow the same example.
3. Students complained that due to the noise of machines and the crowd surrounding the guide, it was impossible for them to listen to all of the information and see the workings of the machines. Dividing the students into smaller groups and having a separate session where the noise is less can be carried out to tackle this issue.
4. Feedback should be taken after every visit to understand the areas that were lacking and improvements should be made accordingly.
5. Colleges should ensure that the chosen industries have some relevance to the specialization, subject and topics from the syllabus so that the students will be able to find some connection to what they have learnt.

6. Faculties who accompany students on the visits should be given prior instructions regarding the protocols that need to be followed during the visit. They also need to be well trained to deal with difficult situations.
7. The ratio of teacher to student should be such that managing the latter could be an easy task. It would help in maintaining discipline.

References

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- Dhanashree Nikam, Role of industrial visit and seminars in management curriculum, Journal of Management and Administration Tomorrow, Vol. 4 No.1 July – December 2015
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- How useful are self-financed courses? Hindustan Times, May 06, 2016

Annexure

The following questionnaire was circulated to students via Google Forms:

1. How many Industrial Visits have you been on?
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - More than 3

2. Name the places you have been to for Industrial Visits.

3. How often did you get an opportunity to ask questions during the visits?
 - Frequently
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Not at all

4. Industrial Visits help in connecting practical knowledge with theoretical concepts.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

5. Industrial Visits provide clarity on challenging topics by filling the gaps in the knowledge.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

6. Industrial Visits provides avenues to improve interpersonal skills.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

7. Industrial Visits help in retaining information for a longer period of time.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

8. Industrial Visits give an insight into the best management practices of the institutions.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

9. Industrial visits inculcate values amongst students like dignity of labour, professionalism, punctuality, etc.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

10. Industrial visits break the monotony through means of interactive learning and handson experience.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

11. How beneficial are industrial visits? Rate your overall experience with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

12. How relevant was the information you gained to your subject specialization?

13. In less than 50 words, describe your experience with Industrial Visits.

