IONEDUCATION NEWS - LETTER
December 2018 - Volume 1 / Issue 32

AICTE Examinations Reforms – IonCUDOS© OBE Software incorporates the recommendations completely!

ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE) has released Examination Reforms recommendations for Engineering Education in India. IonIdea's www.ioncudos.com a proven, time tested and continually evolving software platform completely automates the recommendations. Key features like (a) Integrated curriculum design, delivery and assessment practices (b) Health of question papers with right balance of bloom's level questions and outcome coverages (c) Competencies and performance indicator based reports and continual improvement framework etc.

In the published report, the AICTE's Examinations Reforms Committee says "The globalization of the world economy and higher education are driving profound changes in the engineering education system. Worldwide adaptation of Outcome-Based Education framework and enhanced focus on higher-order learning and professional skills necessitates a paradigm shift in traditional practices of curriculum design, education delivery and assessment. In recent years, worldwide sweeping reforms are being undertaken to bring about essential changes in engineering education in terms of what to teach (content) and how to teach (knowledge delivery) and how to assess (student learning). Examinations or student assessment of students play a very important role in deciding the quality of education. The academic quality of examinations (question papers) in Indian Engineering education system has been a matter of concern for a long time. This report attempts to bring out recommendations for reforms in examination system to meet challenges on emerging engineering education landscape. The recommendations are presented in four sections. In Section-1, the most important drivers for examination reforms in Indian engineering education system are discussed. Section-2 brings out strategies to be adopted to align assessment with the desired student learning outcomes. A two-step method is proposed for mapping the examination questions course outcomes. Section-3 highlights the necessity of designing question papers to test higher order abilities and skills. Application of Blooms taxonomy framework to create the optimal structure of examination papers to test the different cognitive skills is discussed in detail. Challenge of assessing higher order abilities and professional skills through traditional examination system is brought out in Section-4. Several educational experiences and assessment opportunities are identified to overcome the challenges. Appendices contain the supplement material that is helpful for Universities/ Colleges to implement recommendations. At this juncture, reforms in examinations are critical for improvement of the quality and relevance of Indian engineering education. It is hoped that the Report will be of use to Universities and Colleges to bring out the much-needed change."

Link: https://www.aicte-india.org/sites/default/files/ExaminationReforms.pdf

Modi govt about to roll out a mega jobs programme for undergraduates

With unemployment emerging as a major concern ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, three ministries — human resource development, labour and skill development — are set to join hands to train undergraduates and generate jobs for them, starting in 2019.

The Modi government is preparing to roll out a mega 'apprenticeship' programme, specifically targeting students of humanities and other nontechnical courses across private and government-funded higher education institutes, to make them more employable and help them get jobs when they graduate.

A six- to 10-month apprenticeship and on-the-job training with prospective employers, backed with stipends, will be arranged for students in the final year of their degree programmes, ET has learnt.

While technical courses tend to have a better linkage with industry and offer faster employment avenues to graduates, this doesn't always hold true for nontechnical degree holders. This segment constitutes a significantly high number of those without jobs because only a small percentage opts for post-graduation and further studies. Career counselling and relevant apprenticeship are envisaged as part of the plan to make them job-ready.

Central public sector units, sector skill councils and big industry will be linked with the programme to ensure high-quality apprenticeship, basic training and on-the-job training to each student passing out of college, ET has learnt.

Ministers and top officials of the three ministries held a meeting last week to decide on the contours of the programme, set to be jointly launched over the next few days.

The plan is to start implementation in 2019, targeting 1 million students in the 2019-20 academic session. The larger goal is to bring into effect a national 'integrated apprenticeship programme' to 'improve the employability' of over 8 million students passing out of degree programmes.

The Rs 10,000-crore corpus of the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, which has remained largely unused so far, will be unlocked to help fund the stipend-based apprenticeship. The government's contribution to the stipend will be 25% of the stipend, up to Rs 1,500 per month, a person aware of the plan said.

There will be three key focus areas — adding apprenticeship-based, end-of-degree programmes and linking them with higher education institutes, restructuring the bachelor's in vocational courses programme to add the apprenticeship module and integrating all higher education institutes with the National Career Service portal.

The portal will be linked with the website of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to create a seamless dashboard displaying student qualifications, eligibility, their apprenticeship and employment status and a waitlist that is updated when the graduates find employment.

Link:https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/governmentlookstofindjobsforhumanitiesundergraduates/articleshow/67121443.cms

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Is India's higher education system future ready? Here's a view

As the world stands on the brink of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, powered by a wide range of new technology breakthroughs such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), advanced robotics, Internet of Things IoT), Cloud computing and 3D printing, major changes are expected in the labour market globally.

There will be reduced demand for middle-skilled workers doing repetitive tasks and increased demand for more highly-skilled workers -- and also low-skilled workers doing non-routine work. While many developed countries, such as the US and Japan, as also several European economies, are already experiencing this polarisation, the labour market is also hollowing out in many developing countries, although at a rate slower than the developed world.

In the case of India, this polarisation can be seen in the organised manufacturing sector, where the share of high-skilled occupations in total manufacturing employment increased by more than three percentage points, while the share of middle-skilled jobs decreased by 6.3 percentage points from 1993-94 to 2011-12. Looking at the impact of technological progress on various manufacturing industries, the capital-intensive industries, such as automobile manufacturers, have a greater probability of adopting advanced automation and robotic technologies, compared to labour-intensive manufacturing industries such as textile, apparel, leather and footwear, and paper manufacturers.

Further, in the services sector, particularly in the IT sector, e-commerce, banking and financial services and health care services, there is a huge potential for automation technologies, which would increase the demand for skilled workers and reduce the demand for middle-skilled workers.

However, in India, over 80 per cent of the working population is engaged in low-skilled jobs in the unorganised sector. These low-skilled workers aspire to join the middle-skilled workforce in the organised sector to raise themselves from poverty. However, the changing nature of work due to technology advancements in the organised sector prevents their upward labour mobility and any improvement in their incomes.

Addressing these challenges requires reforms in India's higher education system. The institutes of higher learning should shun dated teaching methodologies and redesign the course curriculum by understanding key market transitions amidst the technological advancements. This would enable the country to create a workforce which could be placed in the positions demanded by the companies in the digital era and thus bridge the skill gap in the labour market.

However, looking at the current state of higher education in India, one can see that it is not just the quality of the system which needs to be improved. There is also much to be done in terms of the number of students enrolled in the institutes of higher learning.The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in tertiary education in India is 26.9 per cent, which is lower than that of China (48.4 per cent), Indonesia (27.9 per cent) and the Philippines (35.3 per cent), among others.

Further, India's GER for the male population is 26.3 per cent and 25.4 per cent for females. The GER also varies across different social groups -- 21.8 per cent for the Scheduled Castes and 15.9 per cent for the Scheduled Tribes.

There are also wide variations in the number of colleges for higher education across different states in India, with the lowest number of seven colleges in Bihar for every 0.1 million of eligible population to 51 in Telangana and Karnataka. The top eight states in terms of highest number of colleges are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh, which have 28 or more colleges per 0.1 million of the population. The disparity in the distribution of the colleges is also seen across different districts in these states, with the top 50 districts having about 32.6 per cent of the colleges.

In addition to the inequalities existing in the access to institutions for higher education, another issue is that a majority of the students are enrolled in undergraduate level programmes, compared to the Masters and the Doctoral programmes. Moreover, at the undergraduate level, there is a low pass-out rate -- out of 2,90,16,350 students enrolled at undergraduate level, only 6,419,639 passed-out in 2017.

It is imperative for the country to address these issues given that the Indian system of higher education faces multiple challenges of low gross enrollment in its colleges and universities, with predominance of students settling on undergraduate studies, along with various socio-economic inequalities existing in access to higher learning. Further, emphasis must be placed on increasing the number of students who pass out of the colleges/universities, along with increasing enrollment numbers.

The technology-induced skill gap which the Indian economy is facing across different sectors is bound to widen with the current higher education system. Change has to be brought from outside the existing constructs. Improvement in the teaching methodology from the traditional lecture courses, accreditation of online courses, along with redesigning the course curriculum to be more industry relevant are some of the ways the technology-led changes in the labour market can be dealt with.

Link:https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/education/is-indias-higher-education-system-future-ready-heres-a-view /articleshow /66602474.cms

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