Reforms in Examination and Education System: "India has examination system, not education system"

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Abstract

The examination system of India has remained unchanged for so many years. No doubt this system is full of stress that's why most of Newspaper and magazines publish articles on this topic during the examination session in the education system of India, ability of a student is decided by an examination. In this system, there is no place for the performance of a student in a full academic session. Scoring more and more marks in exams has become the only aim of a student. First of all, if this system is better then all those who scores good marks in these must be brilliant and successful life. But reality is different now a day most of the institutions do not give admission on marks basis. They have a separate test and this trend is growing rapidly because they have no faith in this examination system. The mindset of the society is also responsible for making the exam a source of stress. If someone scores good marks in examination, then society starts treating him like a hero. On the other hand, if someone scores less mark than society treats him just like an untouchable. At this point one question arises what is the importance of getting more and more marks in an examination? Just getting admission in a reputed educational institution or making a first impression to any employer firm. If anyone gets a job, then he must have to perform well on practical front marks of any examination won't work there only knowledge will work there.

Keywords:

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Introduction

EVALUATION in educational context implies broader programme than the examination in which achieving attitudes, interests, personality traits and skill factors take into consideration. Thus, cognitive, affective and psychometric learning outcomes are measured in the evaluation process. The evaluation produces the data for cognitive, affective and psychomotor objective. The traditional examinations are confined to cognitive objectives' only. In this way the evaluation process ascertains the workability of learning experiences and change of behavior of the students. The evaluation is both qualitative as well as quantitative processes. The various types of techniques are used in it, which are as follows our education and examination system is based on equality, not on equity, as per our modern Indian educational system.

Types of examinations conducted by Universities

Universities, colleges and school typically conduct following types of examinations

- Semester Examinations
- Annual Examinations
- Supplementary Examinations

Semester Examinations

Universities typically follow a semester wherein an academic year is divided into two terms. The final assessment is on the basis of:

- Internal Assessments conducted by the respective colleges and university department/ schools through periodic tests, quizzes etc.
- External/ University End semester examination typically conducted by the universities.

Different Universities have different weightages and patterns of internal & external Evaluation. Therefore, each university has a unique examination system process, which they have shaped on the basis of university ordinances, constraints, unique characteristics, resources available etc.

Annual Examination

Annual Examinations are typically conducted by university at the end of an academic term. The purpose of these examinations is to make a final review of the topics covered and assessment of each student's knowledge of the subject at end of the academic term.

Supplementary Examination:

Supplementary examinations are conducted to provide second chance to students who did not qualify in the main exams due to following reasons:

- Failure to secure minimum pass marks in theory or practical examination of a paper or failure to appear in any theory or practical examination on any grounds, including medical may be eligible for supplementary examination in that particular paper.

Competitive and eligibility tested examination: An examination where candidates are ranked according to their grades. If the examination is open for N positions, then first N candidates in ranks pass, the others are rejected. Competitive examinations are used in many countries for university and college admissions or admissions to secondary schools or for positions in the civil service. They are considered an egalitarian way of choosing worthy applicants without risking influence peddling, favoritism or other concerns.

- Few names of Competitive Eligibility Examination:
    1. National Eligibility Test (NET)
    2. Teacher Eligibility Test (TET)
    3. All India Engineering Entrance Examination(AIEEE)
    4. All India Pre-Medical Test(PMT)
    5. Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE)
    6. Engineering Agricultural and Medical Common Entrance Test
    7. State level Eligibility Test (SLET)
    8. State Level Teacher Eligibility Test (SLTET)
    9. Entrance Exam for B.Ed. Admission
    10. Entrance Exam for M.Ed. Admission
    11. Entrance exam for M.Phil Admission
    12. Entrance Exam for Ph.D. Admission etc.
    13. Management Admission Test (MAT)
    14. Common Management Admission Test (CAT)

Major Phases of Examination process

- **Pre-Examination Phase**
- **Examinations**
- **Post-Examination Phase**

PRE-EXAMINATION	→	EXAMINATION	→	POST-EXAMINATION

Issues and Challenges in Examination system in universities:

Universities today face challenges in various aspects of examination process, including Administrative, Infrastructure, Resources allocation, security, etc. Some of the challenges faced by the universities are listed below:

KEY CHALLENGES IN EXAMINATIONS SYSTEM IN UNIVERSITY

- ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES
- INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES
- RESOURCES ALLOCATION
- SECURITY CHALLENGES
- OTHER CHALLENGES
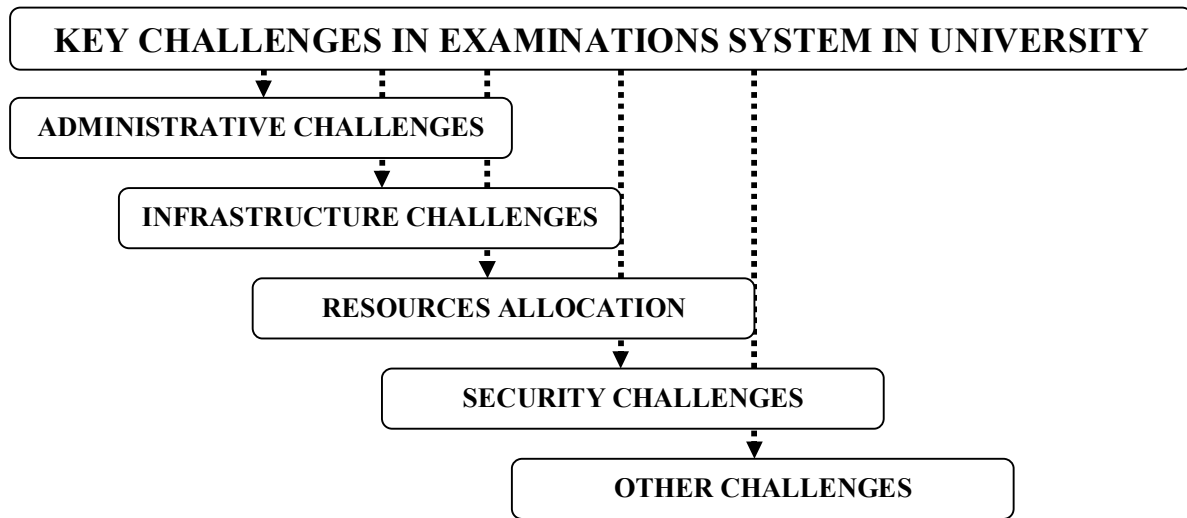
Administrative Challenges:

I. Mushrooming of Affiliated Colleges with inadequate infrastructure and Human Resources: In the past two decades, the number of affiliated colleges and courses has increased manifold. Some of these colleges do not have adequate infrastructure and / or faculty. This sometimes leads to malpractices during examinations.

ii. Multiple Visits by students to University / College: Students have to visit universities / colleges multiple times for information or processing of application forms, examination date, results and syllabus etc., thus wasting his/her precious time and money. Students have to wait for in long queues to take examination forms, deposit examination

fee, to get hall tickets and to get know the status of their results.

iii.   Improper   Packaging: The Universities provide the details of the packages to be made to their printers. The Printers then package the printed question papers and dispatch to respective examination centers. In this process, improper packaging may pose a great threat to the examination process in universities

iv. Delayed / Erroneous Delivery of Question Papers: Delays in receiving sealed packets by the respective examination centers may lead to huge serious concerns and anxieties among personnel involved.

v.   Delay   in   Assessment: Result declaration is an area that directly affects students' future careers, especially final year results. While state governed rules do exist, the results are sometimes delayed, and are unpredictable in terms of release date. Students are most often not informed and authorities fail to specify accurate declaration details. The consolidation of marks is delayed due to inconsistencies in internal marks, delays in the second round of assessment, disputes in merit list creation, etc.

vi.   Cancellation   of   Exams: Due to leakage of papers, the exams is cancelled. This adversely affects the students in many

ways like increased stress, anxiety, loss of time & money, etc. Further, due to delay in exams, students pursuing higher studies or jobs or other career opportunities maybe adversely affected

vii. Printing errors: Printing Errors or errors due to insufficient proof reading are also one of the biggest issues faced by universities.   These   errors   lead   to cancellation of questions and providing marks to students in lieu of that.

Infrastructure Challenges:

I.   Increased   Workload: Number   of Affiliated Colleges, Courses and thereby examinations have increased multifold. This has led to increased workload in the examinations   cell/Divisions   in Universities.

ii.   Lack   of   Dedicated   Examination Cells/Divisions: In   Agricultural universities,   there   is   no   separate establishment of an Examination Cell / Division. During examinations, deputed / pooled   staff   carries   the   duties   of examinations.   These   resources   lack adequate experience for carrying out the examination related activities which may sometimes lead to inadvertent mistakes.

iii. Lack of secured facilities: There is lack of proper secured facilities in select colleges / institutes for storing the sealed packets   of   Questions   papers.   Insecure

custody / storage facilities are prone to break-ins/ theft etc.

iv. Non Availability of appropriate ICT infrastructure: Many colleges / institutes, especially the non-technical colleges / institutes in remote areas lack basic ICT infrastructure. This is a key challenge in implementation of ICT initiatives.

Resource Allocation:

I. Lack of staff in select courses: No constituent colleges for some of the streams like Biotechnology, Food Science, Agri-business Management. It affects the examination related work viz. setting of question papers and moderation of question papers due to lack

Of recognized staff in university.

ii. Lack of Adequate Number of Trained Permanent Staff in Examination Cell/Division: Growing number of affiliated colleges has overburdened the staff of University and Examination Board. In numerous universities, Examination cells/divisions are runs on temporary / contract staff or pooled posts

iii. Non Availability of Eligible Faculty for assessment:

There is a gross shortage of qualified lecturers, readers and professors in concerned courses for assessment of papers.

iv. Lack of adequate technical staff including data entry operators, system

analysts, programmers etc: There is need for technical staff including system analysts, data entry operators, programmers etc in Examination cells / divisions for implementation and maintenance of IT initiatives in a Examinations system in Universities.

Security Challenges:

I. Leakage of Papers during Setting of Papers: Sporadic instances have been noticed where the Paper Setters/ Proof Readers / Staff in charge of setting papers leak the paper for commercial benefits.

ii. Security Threat at Printers: While printing and packaging of the question papers, the question papers pass through various hands. In this process, proper supervision and confidentiality needs to be maintained.

iii. Distribution of Papers: During the distribution of papers, there are serious threats faced by the Universities of leakage of papers. In this process, the examination papers exchange hands of various personnel thus increasing the risk of leakage.

iv. Malpractice in Examinations: Malpractices like Possession of incriminating materials for the purpose of copying, Actual copying, Invigilators dictating or writing answers on the blackboard and Misuse of Technology

(mobile phones / earplugs/ Bluetooth Devices etc.) is also a great concern.

v. Impersonation / Tampering with hall ticket: There are many instances of student impersonations in large universities, which rely on external examiners to supervise Examination execution. Final year exams are more prone to such malpractices.

vi. Tampering with Answer books: Insertion of duplicate answer books in place of original before valuation or at the time of revaluation of scripts. Re-writing the answers once again in between wherever space is available in the answer sheets before valuation/revaluation of scripts. All these pose serious threat to sanctity of examination process.

vii. Tampering with Certificates / Mark sheets etc: Tampering of Mark sheets and certificates by unscrupulous elements of the society is a great challenge faced by the university.

viii. Generation of Fake Certificate / Degrees: Issuance of Fake Certificates in connivance with officials/staff of Universities or creation of fake certificates by students and other mischievous elements is another issue which needs to be addressed. Such practice makes waste of effort and hard work put by meritorious students.

Other Challenges:

I. Paper Chasing: Some students may try to influence emotionally or financially to give more marks to them and a few examiners may oblige them.

ii. Quality of Question Papers (Measuring of Rote Memory rather than analytical / application skills): The examination system in Universities places great stress on rote memory rather than practical application of knowledge or analytical skills.

iii. Geographic Limitations (Remote Centers having transport / internet / security challenges): There are known geographic limitations to large Universities to conduct examinations, like colleges located in distant and remote places, hilly areas and dense forest covered areas etc. This poses a threat to security of examination papers. Leakage at one location can lead to jeopardizing of examination process throughout the university.

The above section details various issues faced by the Universities in the examination process. In further sections, many of these issues are addressed and recommendations provided.

Nature of Present Competitive and Eligibility Examinations:

Patterns of Competitive examinations and Eligibility tests are being changed at regular intervals. In India, two types of

eligibility test are organized biannually and these are National Eligibility Test (NET) and Teacher Eligibility Test (TET). Both of these tests are there to judge the eligibility of a candidate for the required post. If we talk about the NET, then the minor changes in pattern of this exam have been observed regularly and the present change of objective pattern is not appreciable at all. The current pattern of objective set of question in NET examination is not at level to judge the talent and eligibility of an Assistant Professor.

The basic objective is to determine eligibility for college and university level lecturers and for award of Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) for Indian National in order to ensure minimum standards for the entrants in the teaching profession and research. The test for Junior Research fellowship is being conducted since **1984.** The government of India, through its notification dated 28 July 1988 entrusted the task of conducting the eligibility test for lectureship to University Grant Commission. Consequently, UGC conducted the first ever National Eligibility Test (NET), Common to both eligibility for lecturership and Junior Research Fellowship in December 1989 since then it is conducted twice every years once each in June and December.

Since 1989 the pattern of NET exam has been changed many times in many ways but during December 2012 the examination pattern was completely become objective, in which all the three part of paper are composed of objective questions. As a result of that more than 50000 candidates have cleared the exam during December 2012 earlier results were only 6000 to 7000 on average. The reason of so much passing percentage is the change in the pattern of examination, which is not good to judge the eligibility of lecturership. The earlier patterns of this examination consist of descriptive type questions in paper –III carrying 200 marks was valid to judge the appropriateness of candidate for lecturership, it includes various levels to judge the expertise of candidate like level of introduction, level of explanation, level of Achievement, level of Interpretation, level of Critical analysis, Ability of synthesis, level of Critical thinking, creative aspects of Personality, his level of knowledge and understanding, application of Ideas etc.. These all levels can be included to focus on four points that are to be considered in good lecturer.

- *Teacher Competence*
- *Teacher Expectation*
- *Teacher Personality*
- *Teacher Style*

In present scenario of examination these four aspects are missing so it is very much needed to be included to do improvement.

Controversies on National eligibility test

While a section of academicians advocated the abolition of the National Eligibility Test, the All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Organization (AIFUCTO) has strongly opposed attempts to scrap the National Eligibility Test (NET). The organization advocated that the test improves the standard of teaching in the country and instead of abolishing it all together the government must revisit some of its provisions that are making it flawed and unimplementable.

National Eligibility Test (NET) of June 2012 was the most controversial examination because its results were published on 18 September 2012 & after the publication of the results, the Commission allegedly altered the Test's qualification norms by mandating that candidates in the general category score an aggregate of 65 per cent for all three of the NET's papers to become eligible for lectureship. The corresponding figure for the OBC category is 60 per cent and that of the SC/ST category is 55 per cent. According to the appearing students, in the original notification of the UGC it was specified that candidates in the general

category should score at least 40 per cent for papers one and two and 50 per cent for paper three to be eligible for consideration for the final preparation of the result.UGC set an aggregate pass criteria General - 65%, OBC - 60% and SC/ST - 55%. In the light of the student protests and representations, the UGC released a supplementary list on 12 November 2012, which although qualified a few more candidates, but it did not specify any criteria for the revised list. Added to this was the fact that there were anomalies in the results declared where candidates securing less than 50 percent aggregate were declared as qualified whereas many general candidates with more 60 percent remained unqualified. More than 7000 candidates approached the Kerala High Court against the University Grants Commission (UGC). The Kerala High court declared as illegal the new norms fixed by UGC for the National Eligibility Test (NET) for college and university lectureship. The court held that fixing of higher aggregate marks for three categories (General, OBC and SC/ST), that too just before the announcements of results, cannot be justified as the same was "not supportable by law". In the light of this judgment, the University Grants Commission added the specific note "NOTIFICATION REGARDING

PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA FOR DECLARATION OF RESULT OF UGC NET TO BE HELD ON 30TH DECEMBER, 2012" on its website just two days before the examination. It also listed stepwise clearance criteria for candidates of different categories and subjects according to the competitive cut-offs fixed by the University Grants Commission, with an aim to clear top 15 percent candidates only.

Reform in examination: The main aim of education is to do all round development of the student. Whole education process is designed to attain this development. It generally involves three main domains of student personality and development of these three domains is the main aim of education. These domains are known as **Cognitive domain**, **Affective domain** and **Psychomotor.**

The extent to which these three domains of personality have been developed and at which level the aim of education is achieved can be evaluated only by the mean of examination, it helps us to measure the level of development. To evaluate the three different domains the examination system should also be design in such a manner to analyze the three aspect of human personality. The system of examination should include the interest, aptitude, intelligence, and emotions of the students. Present examination system is only cognitive based in which Affective and psychomotor domain lag behind.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD EXAMINATION AND ELIGIBILITY TEST

The reconcilement in present way of education is according to **7R**'s which includes **R**eading, W**r**iting, **A**rithmetic, **R**ecreation, **R**esponsibility, **R**elationship, **R**ights. In the same way the restructuring of examination system should be done.

Lack of time is also one of the problem examination systems. The duration of three hours in semester and annual examination is not sufficient. This is total partiality against those students who are unable to write with good pace but can give a good explanation and because of their low speed they are not able to give their best in these types of examinations. So this concept of exams should be replaced with some new concepts which include the option of time duration of two,

three and four hours which is to be selected by the students before applying of form. This change in concept may prove to be better to bring some positive and best result.

Quantity and quality is a major issue of examination and education systems of India, as already been discussed earlier, due to change in pattern in National Eligibility Test (NET) the quantity of NET qualified students is increased almost by ten times which is decreasing the quality and the system is need to be improved. It can be done by reintroducing the subjective cum descriptive pattern in NET which will improve the qualitative aspect rather the quantitative. During the master degree the students faces the long essay

types of question in exams but the eligibility test includes objective set of questions. This is totally indifferent pattern for a student, who cannot utilize his previous knowledge of attempting descriptive question to new objective ones**.** This is the area where some stress should be given, the education system of colleges and universities should show association with the pattern of eligibility examinations. Either the pattern of annual examinations should be objective based or the pattern of eligibility examinations should be descriptive one.

So, there is a need of strong association and correlation between the two examination systems. In straight word, the most suitable and affective way to improve the quality of any examination system is where an objective pattern should be replaced with composition of objective, short answer, essay type, comprehensive types of questions. In other words an examination system should be designed in such a way that it should evaluate the complete quality and various domains of students which can result in better screening of capabilities and this change can bring the strength in overall system of education.

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