

On – Demand Examination

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Examination is a mode of measuring the performance or abilities of students in an academic field. In a formal system of education, examination serves the three fold purpose of estimating progress, indicating defects and giving helpful hints for future guidance.

In our country, the normal course of conducting Examination is twice a year, preferably, in the middle and at the end of the year. This sort of examination is known as traditional examination (term-end examination). As the Term End Examination is conducted in the month of June and December every year in a fixed frame, it has certain limitations to meet the demand of the learners as per their convenience and preparation. It has been noticed that majority of learners are working somewhere miss their examinations during the Term End Examinations. The main reason is that those learners who are employed, they do not get leave from their organizations for the examinations. It has been also found that many of the students appear without proper preparations which lead to the lower percentage of results in many courses.

In order to overcome the limitations of the term-end examination, On- Demand Examination is an innovative step forward to make the examination system more flexible and to provide an opportunity for the learners to take up the examination as per desire and preparation.

In India, National Focus Group on Examination Reforms (2006) has very clearly recommended providing flexibility to the students to select date and time as per their convenience.

The scheme of On-Demand Examination is successfully operational in National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) at different locations (Prasad, 2008). The individualised question papers were generated locally and the registration for On-Demand Exam was also done manually at these locations.

At higher education level, the National Center for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) at Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has developed a comprehensive ICT enabled system of Examination On- Demand which not only provides the learners to appear in the examination as per their preparation and convenience but also provides automated examination management system.

With increasing use of ICT in the field of education, the concept of online and On-Demand Examination is being encouraged all over the world. National Open University of Nigeria has also taken initiative to start On- Demand Exam as an alternative to the end of semester exam. (Okonkwo, 2008).

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In India, IGNOU has introduced a more flexible and learner friendly scheme of On-Demand Exam (ODE). In this scheme of examination, students who have completed the period of minimum study hours and submitted all their assignments can choose the date of examination as per their convenience and preparation, and they need not wait for six months for term-end examination. This scheme is a boon for those who have failed or could not appear in any paper for some reason. It will also benefit those students who could not appear in all the courses of a programme in the term-end examination.

The result of On-Demand Examination will be announced within two weeks of appearing in the examination. This will help the students whose maximum period of study is about to expire or those who need immediate results for the progress of their career.

On-Demand Examination scheme is expected to improve results and stop malpractices, as the entire process of registration, paper generation and result preparation is computer based and Examination is carried under camera-surveillance.

Features of On-Demand Examination:

The main features of the On-Demand Exam are following:

- **On-Demand Examination is completely On-line.** It is flexible and ICT enabled system of examination independent of the traditional fixed time frame.
- **On-line registration** – Receipt of registration fee, Hall tickets indicating date, time and examination center is issued online.
- **It has facility for multimode registration** – Fee payment which includes On-line payment through credit card, bank draft and cash challan.
- **Unique technology for candidate identification** - There is an inbuilt mechanism for checking the authenticity of the student's data, eligibility for the exam, validity of the admission etc.
- **Simple and user friendly.** It is also cost effective and saves time and efforts in setting question papers in data-base management and in data transfer.
- The in-built security mechanism of software takes care of the security of the question banks and database.

The important security features are as given below:

Security features of On-Demand Examination:

- The entire scheme of ICT based system has enabled Examination on Demand as safe, secured and truly transparent.
- Question Bank is very important for generating the required number of question papers for On-Demand Exam.
- Data base of course wise question bank is stored in a password protected system in encrypted form and it can not be accessed by any body.

- Random parameter questions – the number of different question papers can be generated randomly by the computer out of already **developed** question Bank based on the blue-print and paper design of the subject as and when demanded.
- All such generated question papers are different with same difficulty level.
- Each question paper has unique bar code having date and time of generation.
- No manual marking, marking scheme for each question paper is also generated along with the question paper which can be accessed only after 24 hours of the On-Demand Examination.
- The inbuilt security mechanism of software takes care of the security of the question banks and database.
- Centralised control on the whole examination starting from the registration to the declaration of results.

Some of the advantages of On-Demand examination are following:

Advantages of On-Demand Examination Scheme:

- Learner Centric, flexibility in examination system. It allows the student to get assessed when she/he is ready. Readiness depends on the student and not on institution.
- Attempts to remove the stress of appearing in Exams, whether for all subjects or in one subject at a fixed time and schedule.
- Attempts to remove the threat of failure in examination.
- Removes frustration and depression etc.
- Malpractices will be reduced, as it is a system where the tools of evaluation are unique to an individual student. Every question for each student is different having comparable difficulty level.
- From Teacher's point of view, it has lots of scope in reducing the work load of setting question papers and assignments.
- Knowledge of results is almost immediate and success, even in one subject, is a strong motivating factor.
- Degree and level of performance is decided by the student who can reappear in the examination as many times as one wants, till satisfied.

Conclusion:

The scheme of On-Demand Examination will reduce the fear of exam and exam related stress. It may also help in reducing workload on term- end examination. It is also expected that when the students get chance to appear in the examination as per their preparation it may help improving the pass percent of students in different courses.

Conclusively it can be said that the scheme of On-Demand Examination has revolutionized the whole evaluation system by making it learner centric and flexible and may provide a more credible system of examinations free of unfair means.

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