

50% FLUNK IN B.E. EXAMS

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Even though Tamil Nadu leads the country on several fronts, including Information Technology, it lags behind in the undergraduate engineering stream, with less than 50 per cent of students failing their most recent semester exams.

In a reply to an RTI petition, Anna University has revealed that of the 7,02,347 B.E. students from over 500 engineering colleges in the state, who appeared in the semester exams in April/May this year only about 50 per cent passed. The pass percentage in M.E. is better with 70.32 per cent cracking the exam.

Academicians blamed it on the school education system as they allege it encourages rote learning instead of enhancing students' thinking and analytical skills.

Former vice-chancellor of Anna University Prof.E. Balagurusamy said that over 75 per cent of students passed the semester exams a decade ago when he held the position at the university.

"The School Education Department has to be blamed first, then the university. Both have failed in their responsibilities. The Tamil Nadu State Board school education system encourages rote learning. If one looks at the Class 10 and 12I board exam question papers, one will find that most of the questions are straightforward from the book. How can one expect students to learn subjects from the outside world," he said.

Criticising Anna University for its failure in not revamping the teaching-learning process, the

that it was the responsibility of the university to identify the reasons for students' failure and help them pass the subjects.

Adding to Prof. Balagurusamy's view, eminent academician and school education expert Dr S.S. Rajagopalan said that Tamil Nadu's school education system had for long promoted rote learning even after recommendations by several experts, seeking to do away with the system.

"It is the students from a poor economic background who join third grade private engineering colleges that lack quality and fail in exams. This also leads to students committing suicide as they cannot pass the exam. So the system has to change right from the school level," he said, adding that one had to look at the number of students who did not complete the course within the stipulated four years.

Asked about the steps taken by Anna University to improve the pass percentage of students, university Vice-Chancellor Prof.M.Rajaram said that the university had revised the curriculum this year and had brought in the mentorship system for students, in which faculty would identify students who needed help in academics and help them cope with subjects. "I hope with all these measures the results will improve this year," he said.

A senior school education department official refuted the claims made by academicians and said that the state had done away with rote learning with samacheer kalvi (common schooling system), which increased students' analytical and reasoning skills.



Students from top colleges bag varsity ranks

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Students from top engineering colleges in the state have bagged top university ranks and medals in the recently concluded exams conducted by Anna University this year. Several rank holders are from top private colleges in Chennai.

The top rankers in Chennai belong to colleges, including Sri Sairam Engineering College, Jeppiaar Engineering College, Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering, RMK Engineering College, Sri Sivasubramaniya Nadar College of Engineering, St.Joseph's College of Engineering and Velammal college of engineering.

Over 1,000 students from about 80 colleges in the state secured university ranks this year.

B.E./B.TECH RESULTS

Branch	Month & Year	Students appeared	Students passed	Pass Percentage
B.E./B.Tech	April/May 2014	7,02,347	3,47,622	49.49%
M.E./M.Tech	April/May 2014	34,644	24,362	70.32%