



Board Exam Twice a Year

Description

Theme:

- The Ministry of Education of India has announced that board exams will be held twice a year. The first board exams under the new system will be held in 2024 for students in class 10 and class 12. This aligns with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP aims to reduce the pressure on students and help them develop holistically. This will be an optional facility for students, instead of a mandatory requirement.

The Problems with the Current Examination System:

- Currently, board exams are held once a year, and students often feel as though their entire academic year hinges on a single exam. This can lead to immense pressure and anxiety.
- Because of how high-stakes the board exams are due to the fact that they are held once a year, it discourages students from taking risks, experimenting with new ideas and focusing on rote memorization of facts and figures to score better marks in the exam. This does not help in developing students' critical thinking skills.
- With the emphasis on year-end results, the entire focus of learning shifts towards being able to perform well in exams, rather than learning to be able to apply their knowledge to real-world problems. This is why the current examination system is often criticized for being more focused on rote memorization of facts and figures, rather than on developing students' critical thinking skills.
- The importance of exams overshadows the importance of students' physical, emotional, and social development. The mental health impact of the annual board exams can not be underestimated.
- The current examination system is inflexible and does not account for individual learning paces, and can be particularly challenging for students who require additional time and practice to master certain subjects or topics.

Pros of Board Exams Twice a Year:

- Conducting board exams twice a year will help spread out the pressure and reduce the risk of students developing mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.
- It will also help reduce the pressure on students who may not be able to understand certain topics and are still resorting to rote learning for the exam.
- It will encourage students to focus more on learning to acquire new knowledge rather than simply studying for exams.
- Students will have the chance to learn from their mistakes and improve their performance in subsequent exams.

Cons:

- The primary concern is that some students may not take the first exam seriously, believing they can study for the second one and still score well. However, this approach often leads to a backlog of studies, making it nearly impossible to catch up. Consequently, students end up cramming, defeating the purpose of the biannual exams meant to prevent such cramming practices.
- Due to the short intervals between board exams, which create a lack of time for students, some may opt for shallow learning instead of engaging in deep and comprehensive learning.
- Students may have less time for extracurricular activities, sports, and hobbies that contribute to their overall personality development.
- Students who do not perform well on both board exams may experience a decrease in self-esteem. This is especially true if they are comparing themselves to their peers who are doing better.

Conclusion:

Holding board exams twice a year is a great step taken by the Ministry of Education, which will help reduce pressure on students, promote deep learning, critical thinking, and competency assessment, and move away from months of coaching and rote memorization.

However, we must remain cautious of the potential drawbacks, including students not taking the exams seriously and procrastinating, which could promote cramming and shallow learning, which was supposed to be reduced. Balancing extracurricular activities and addressing self-esteem issues are also concerns.

To make this transition successful, it is vital to offer students guidance and emphasize the value of continuous learning. Biannual board exams have the potential to create a more balanced and effective education system in India.

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