

AI, Robotics Find Way into B-School Curriculum

Future chief executives and managers are learning how to leverage machine intelligence to run businesses

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Mumbai: Artificial intelligence and robotics are making their way into management curriculum of the country's business schools, including Indian Institutes of Management, even as machine intelligence and Internet of Things increasingly influence business strategies and analytics.

Two months ago, SP Jain Institute of Management & Research (SPJIMR) launched two courses — 'Reinventing Business with IoT, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning' and 'IoT in Supply Chain' for students of its flagship MBA programme.

The institute aims to expose students to full ecosystem of IoT, said Anil Vaidya, area head of information management at SPJIMR. "A management graduate will not do an engineer's job, but in a world where automation

is fast disrupting businesses, anyone in leadership position must have knowledge of technology, which they can use to improve business," he told ET.

As part of the courses, students would build their own IoT devices, deploy them in the real world and monitor their working, using cloud services. They would be able to store data in cloud that they can access and download when required to do necessary analysis.

Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) in Bengaluru and Kozhikode are offering courses on AI and robotics that can be connected to business strategy to enhance performance, output and customer experience. Others such as IIM Calcutta cover AI within broader courses on business and data analytics.

IIM Kozhikode's revised Fellow Program in Management (FPM) curriculum of the IT and systems area has both artificial intelligence and machine learning as elective courses. "Employ-

New Learnings

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■ **IIM Kozhikode** has AI and machine learning electives in its revised fellow programme in IT and Systems area

■ **IIM Bangalore** conducts elective course on AI for its MBA students

■ **IIM Calcutta** covers AI within broader courses on business and data analytics



ability of students enhances with skills, and peaks if enthusiasm can be tapped into," said Mohammed Shahid Abdulla, associate professor, information technology and systems at IIM Kozhikode. "AI and machine learning have both managerial applicability and a futuristic touch that enthuses students," he said.

One of the courses focuses on AI-linked automation and replacement of human job roles.

IIM Bangalore has an elective course on AI for its MBA students. U Dinesh Kumar, chairperson of the Data Analytics Lab at IIMB, said several students are opting for it. "A lot of the automation happening today is through AI and machine learning, and it is a necessity for managers to learn how to provide decision through analytics," he said.

IIM Calcutta conducts a specialised course in business analytics. Anindya Sen, professor of economics at IIM Calcutta, said AI and machine learning have be-

come essential tools in strategy courses "when you are producing CEOs and managers".

Vaidya of SPJIMR said it's vital for students "to understand the technological foundation and design business perspective on top of it".

"The idea is to teach them do ask the right questions, to get the right vendors to develop these, how to stream data, how to write a bot, etc.," he said. "MBA students should know the business value of all this and connecting all these concepts with business to figure out the different business models and improve customer engagement."

Globally, a few business schools such as The Kellogg School of Management, MIT Sloan School of Management and INSEAD run standalone programmes on AI and robotics. Others, such as NYU Stern School of Business, Harvard Business School and London Business School explore AI within courses on data analytics and coding.