

Computer science losing sheen, mechanical hot pick in BTech

Versatile Job Openings Key To New Trend

Hemali Chhapia | TNN

Mumbai: Engineering is being revisited. Even as seats in this professional course are reducing across the country (from 16.3 lakh in 2013-14 to about 14.7 lakh this year), mechanical engineering seems to be emerging as the hottest pick in times of uncertainty in the IT and software industry.

While engineering continues to be a big draw, its 70-odd options undergo a life cycle of their own. Experts say industry growth, which translates into more jobs and higher incomes, is what decides the path

COURSE CORRECTION

STREAM	INTAKE				
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Computer Science	4,14,762	4,08,559	3,88,077	3,68,267	3,53,825
Mechanical	3,30,331	3,58,052	3,47,480	3,35,603	3,17,444
Electronics and Comm	3,43,180	3,41,916	3,22,292	3,02,800	2,80,653
Civil	2,22,510	2,55,139	2,46,903	2,40,168	2,28,841
Electrical	2,10,803	2,18,071	2,09,653	2,00,570	1,90,780

that colleges and students take. And many feel the sun is setting on the computer science engineering stream. While 25.44% of all students opted for it in 2013-14, that has dropped to around 24% this year.

At the same time, mechanical engineering is racing ahead after pipping electronics and communications, which used to be the second most popular choice for four years. While 20.22% of stu-

dents chose mechanical engineering in the past four years, that proportion has increased to 21.6% now.

Core courses like civil and electrical engineering are also expected to be top on the charts.

Although data from the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) shows that seats in undergraduate engineering are reducing, experts feel the course will continue to

have lakhs of takers. "Engineering has become a broad-based course like BA, BCom and BSc. From here, students go on to do several courses," says IIT-Madras director Bhaskar Ramamurthy.

"Mechanical engineering is a great branch. One can fit into a lot of industries after ME," adds Ramamurthy. "But given some amount of uncertainty in the IT sector, there are more takers for mechanical—because mechanical students can join IT companies, but the reverse is not possible."

G D Yadav, vice-chancellor of the Institute of Chemical Technology, says mechanical is rising in popularity because manufacturing industry needs these engineers. "There is so much new construction, new infrastructure, machinery and mechanical engineers are needed everywhere."