



A survey conducted by the editorial team of Amity International School, Noida, revealed some startling results. Out of the 316 students questioned from all the science sections, only 57 students said they were serious about appearing for the IIT-JEE. Moreover 176 of them admitted they are enrolled in a coaching institute, and 314 students said they go for some form of tuition classes. A staggering 270 students confessed they have no intention of pursuing science after school, and would rather go for courses like designing, law, economics or the administrative services. Four students in our knowledge have changed their streams altogether. So what is the reason for this? We explore...

Imaging: Dinesh Kumar, Pic: Keshav Chandna, V C, (WA), AIS Noida

Is engineering still the best option?



Too Much Steam In The Engine?

Kanchan Joneja, X-J & Vaishnavi Sridhar, XI-A, AIS Noida

Undeniably, parents and 'over-concerned' relatives have a huge role to play in a child's choosing science over other streams. Parental pressure, although essential in channelising a child's mind in the right direction initially, can trigger a totally different reaction when incessantly driven into the mind of the child. Disconcerting newspaper reports highlighting teenage suicides and the mushrooming of adolescent counseling centers are also testimony to this notion. At some point of time we all would have heard our parents tell us how they want us to have a better life

than they had. But when it comes to choosing a career path, they may tend to take it a little too far. Teens try to make the right decisions and express opinions, but are ever so often lost in the labyrinth of parental expectations and their own potential. Many parents force their kids to pursue engineering not only because of the future aspect of financial security, but more importantly because of the social status connected with the intellectual label. Some want their kids to follow in their footsteps while some may want to live their own dreams through their children. The result, more often than not: a self-doubting, growing teenager moves on, slogs, only to stop mid-life and question his whereabouts. ☹



Graphics: Kanchan Joneja X-J, AIS Noida

The train changes track

Karan Saharya, XII-C, AIS Noida

Most of the students claim they chose science over commerce on the basis of their Class X Board results. However, the fact that the syllabus for Class X is much less and much simpler than that of Class XI cannot be ignored. There have been numerous cases in which students in the latter half of Class XI noticed that they in fact did not possess much of a scientific temper or aptitude. "Till Class X, I used to score well in my science tests. So I decided to opt for sci-

ence at the plus-two stage. But it was only in Class XI that I realized how noxious science can be. Now I think I will go for economics or law and instead of preparing for IIT-JEE, focus on securing good marks in my Boards," says Divij Joshi. "I don't think the JEE is meant for me. I plan to take my SAT's and go abroad for higher studies," says Akshat Agarwal. There is no doubt that engineering at the graduate level and science at school, are very different concepts in terms of the amount of effort required.

The bogey exceeds capacity

Gautam Shah, XII-H, AIS Noida

It is a disheartening truth that even in today's limitless and uninhibited world, where students are encouraged to pursue their own interests and alternative professions are shooting up, herd mentality still persists. This is evident from the fact that there are millions of aspirants who join coaching institutes year after year to clear perplexing entrance exams for engineering and medical colleges. But are they all passionate about what they are doing or do they do it all thinking it is the safest option? In any case most of them bite off more than they

can chew. Some believe that the need of the hour is for the imaginative and efficient engineers. Mr. Sunil Kumar Paribrajak of the Synchro Department admits, "Many young engineers enter the industry but only the talented ones thrive, while others end up doing moribund desk jobs, rarely satisfied, regardless of their salaries". The widespread culture of coaching institutes itself has its pros and cons. On one hand it prepares students for competitive exams but leaves them completely stressed out. As such, a balance between cramming facts and developing softer skills is necessary.

Our Verdict

Engineering is, and has been, one of the most popular courses in this country. There is no doubt that there is a huge demand for fresh engineers, and that engineering as a course opens up a number of options, including management and finance, two of the biggest attractions in the market. The claim that engineering is a safe option, because it provides financial security; a degree to fall back on; and that engineering colleges can absorb a large number of students, is valid to a very large extent. We must not forget that engineering colleges are not self-feeding, they are part of the education system and are popular because students have made them popular. Yet it cannot be denied that the entire process is exhaustive and demands a lot of patience and struggle, something that is putting a major load on the shoulders of the anyway hassled youth. Children

after class XII are at a very vulnerable stage of their lives and pressure from parents, peers and teachers only intensify the backlog. They may get swayed by their hitherto latent rebellious streak and may play out engineering as a rather wicked concept. Such an idea may favour the student in the short run, but forgetting why parents are bringing up the subject would be nothing short of bovine. Parents only desire the happiness of the child. They want the child not to have any regrets as an adult and to be financially independent. Coaching institutes and the herd mentality too have a large role to play in the shaping of the formative mind, but it all comes down to taking decisions at the right time and creating a mutual understanding with both parents and teachers. Science cannot always be the best option for everybody and commerce and arts cannot be deemed as secondary. ☹

Inputs : Parth Singh, XII-A, AIS Noida

