

# Bilingual Digital Question Bank

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## Background

Assessment and evaluation is an integral part of any teaching-learning process. Different tools and techniques are adopted for evaluating the performance of the learners. In IGNOU, the process of evaluation includes self assessment through in text questions, Tutor Marked Assignments, six monthly Term-End-Examination or through On-Demand Term end Examination. For all these activities, there is a need of test papers or question papers after every six months.

## Need for the Innovation

It is a fact that setting up of question papers and assignments is a regular and mammoth exercise which has to be done twice in a years. Over the years the number of courses has increased to more than 3000. It means at every six month we are required to set up question papers for so many courses and also new sets of assignments are to be prepared every year. In this process, every time lots of time and effort of the faculty is consumed in setting and moderation of the question papers and assignments. University has to pursue with so many paper setters and moderators for getting the work done in time, which is not only costly but time consuming also. Many a times, it becomes difficult to find right person at right time. Besides it, the university started conducting On-Demand exam every Friday, for which a number of question papers were required. In order to develop so many question papers, different types of equivalent questions were required. To meet this need, the idea of developing digital dynamic question bank came up. This question bank scheme was named as e-Prashnakosh.

## Description of the Innovation

The scheme of e-Prashnakosh included mainly two components – development of a software and development of question bank. To begin with different types of questions based on specific design and blueprint of the question papers of different courses were developed with the help of subject experts. For development of question bank mainly two modes were adopted – through workshop mode or by assigning work for home as per a specific item sheet.

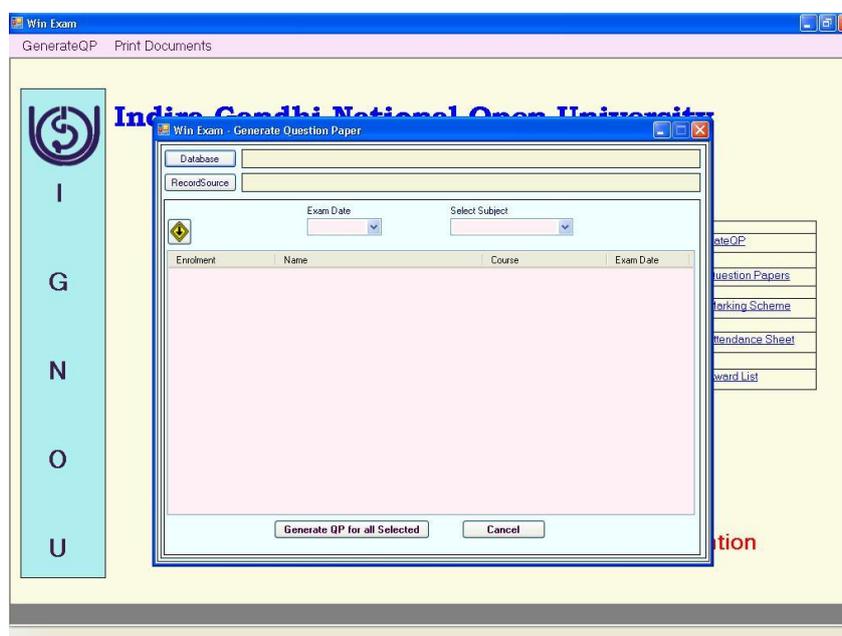
All the question items obtained from different sources were first coded in terms of course or subject area, block, unit name, topic, subtopic, type of question, marks, etc. and then converted into usable database. It was an ongoing process. All these question items were first coded as per a particular pattern and then they were computerized and converted into database. They were finalized after proper review and moderation by the subject experts including internal and external experts. Maintenance and updating of the question bank was a continuous process, because with the passage of time many question items become outdated and need to be removed and many new question items need to be added to the question bank. Thus, the digital question bank was – dynamic in nature. The questions of this bank were used for generating question papers as and when required.

## Innovative Features

Some of the innovative features of the digital question bank are given below :

- The digital question bank is highly secure as it is stored in encrypted form.

- Digital question bank can be used any time to generate question papers instantaneously for different purposes.
- It will save time and effort of the faculty. The saved time could be utilized in other academic activities.
- Online server based question bank can be updated, and modified whenever required.
- Question bank can have all types of questions with proper coding.



## Achievements

The development of the Digital Question Bank – e-Prashnakosh was initiated as a component of the scheme of On-demand Examination in 2008 with 8 Courses for two Certificate level programmes. Gradually, the Question Bank for several other Programmes and Courses was developed. By the end of 2011, a huge Question Bank having about 2 Lakh questions both in Hindi and English medium were developed for more than 200 Courses of the University.

Blueprint and Question Paper designs were also developed for all Courses so as to generate identical and parallel Question Papers. Besides it, the marking scheme was also developed for all the questions.

However, the generation of digital question bank in the university had certain challenges also such as non-willing attitude of the faculty to go for such type of question bank, lack of technical support in terms of the infrastructure and server, and lack of proper manpower to coordinate and assist in the development of question bank in so many courses in the university. Initially, hardly any faculty was willing to come up for question bank development. But with the special interest and support of the then Vice Chancellor and continuous persuasion of the coordinator and also with the increased success of the scheme of on-demand exam in the university, faculty started supporting and cooperating in the development of question bank. As a result finally question bank in about 200 courses having about 2 lakh questions both in Hindi and English were developed. Finally, with the change of power, the support from the authorities got discontinued and the scheme was stopped.

## Applications and Uses of the Innovation

With increasing number of students to be evaluated, increase in the frequency of the tests to be conducted and concern for the needs of human resource involved, an effective, objective, valid and reliable system of setting of question papers with least rigidity and maximum practicability is required. The solution of such issues lies in developing a multipurpose questions bank having a large number of different types of questions in digital form specifying different parameters of each question. The scheme of digital question bank can be utilized for generating any number of individualized question papers, test papers and assignment tests both for formative and summative assessment. It can be used for implementing the idea of instant testing – instant result. The use of digital question bank will not only save time and money, but it will relieve the faculty from the task of frequent preparation of question papers.

## Way Forward

The digital question bank can prove to be a very powerful tool to revolutionize the entire assessment and evaluation system in the university. In future, the question bank of the e-Prashnakosh may be utilized for generating ***any number of parallel question papers within no time*** for various purposes such as for generating multiple sets of question papers for Term end Examination, for individualized question papers for on-Demand Examination, for preparing students assignments whenever requires, for preparing question papers for face to face examination, and for preparing online test papers for online examination system.

The question bank once developed will be useful for future for a longer period. The question bank may include all types of questions suitable for written examination, oral examination and practical exam or for assignments. Because of the dynamic nature of the Question Bank, it can be updated, modified and revised by the faculty and subject experts from time-to-time.

## Coordinator and Innovator

**Dr. Oum Prakash Sharma**

**Period : 2008-2013**