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Analysing Choice Based Credit system of Higher Education in India

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Abstract:

The process of education is dynamic. It requires adaptation to meet societal and international expectations. Developed countries started implementing credit systems for their higher education institutions (HEIs) in the 1990s. The Yashpal committee report and the National Knowledge Commission recommended changes to India's higher education system so that it is on par with other developed countries worldwide. In order to incorporate improvements, the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), which is comparable to the American University Credit System (AUCS) and the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in Europe.. In 2015–16, central universities were required to implement this system in its first phase. All HEIs must adhere to the credit system following the National Education Policy (2020)'s adoption. Time is of the essence for comprehending the CBCS in order to properly deploy NEP. This system will help teachers to be flexible in designing and transacting curriculum, to be free to choose the method and technology as per their interest and moreover this system provides full freedom before learners with ample choices. There are options to choose the course and even to modify the course mid way. Learners can choose to transfer the course and units to other departments within the institution or outside the nation. This piece of writing aims to explain the higher education system's Choice Based Credit System (CBCS). This essay explains the steps taken by CBCS to ensure that learners can easily comprehend the system.

Key words: CBCS, NEP, UGC, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

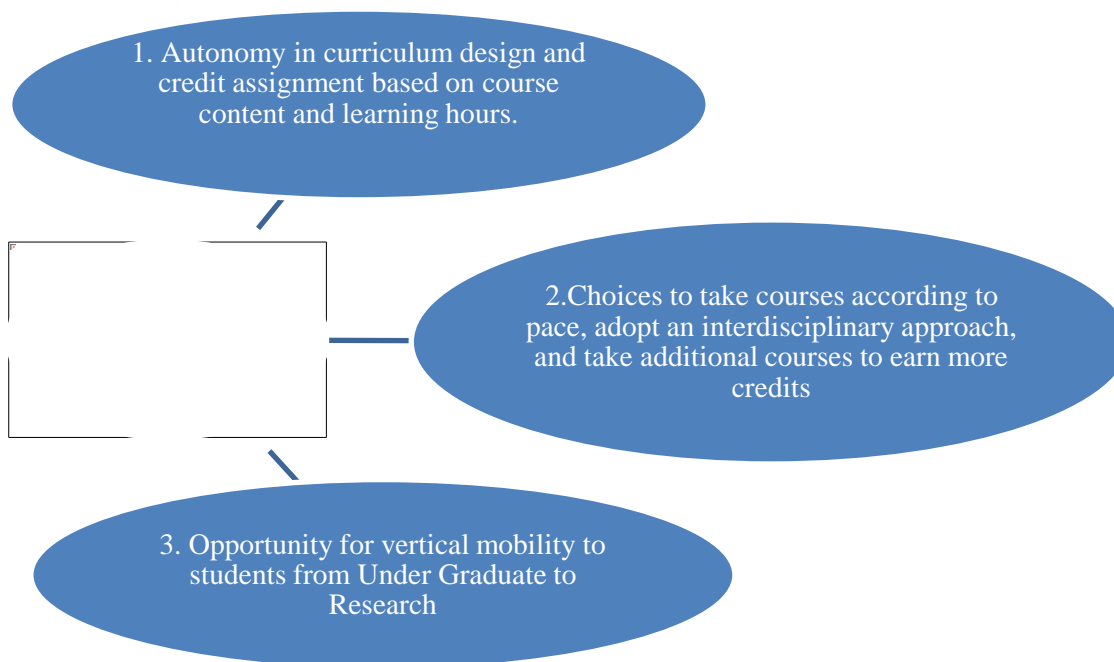
Introduction:

Since independence India is trying to be equivalent to other countries in all sectors, education is one of those. Various commissions and committees recommended different types of improvement for the overhauling of education system. To include improvement and overhauling Higher Education the UGC has initiated CBCS pattern in 2015-16 in all Central Universities. National Education Policy 2020 makes it compulsory for all HEIs to implement CBCS for UG and PG. Therefore, there emerges a need to know and understand the CBCS for the benefit of learner and institution. This system provides facility for the learner. Here learners can choose the course according to their own needs, pace, interest and situation. Inter and intra transferability is also provided for students. This transferability demands uniformity in HEIs of India. This system has the ability to change the whole system of Higher Education from subject centric to learner centric.

Background of the study:

The NEP proposes the revision and revamping of the whole education system as it lays emphasis on development of the creative potential of each and every learner. To transfer India into a vibrant Global knowledge super power HEIs should be more flexible, holistic and multidisciplinary in attitude. For this Choice Based Credit System is a significant step; in this system learners are provided a degree/diploma or certificate according to the number of credits earned by learners associated to various component of an Educational program. Paper system is replaced by credit system, marks system is replaced by grade points and yearlong pattern is replaced by uniform semester based academic year.

Key Points: Draft Report of National Credit Framework highlighted the key points of CBCS as:



Before going into detail we must know the process of assigning credits. The process given by National Credit Framework for higher education is as follow:

For completing one year course/program 40 credits will be provided which contains in 1200 notional learning hours. The UGC or other regulatory authority can change or modify the learning hours by adding more courses.

Serial number	Example of Higher Education qualification	Total learning Hour	Total credits per year	NCRF credit level	Credit points
01	UG Certificate 1 Year(I Sem. II Sem.)	1200	40	4.5	180
02	UG Diploma first two years i } ii } sem. iii }	1200	40	5	200
03	Bachelor's Degree 3Years i } ii } Sem. iii } iv } v } vi }	1200	40	5.5	220

04	Bachelor's Degree (both) Honours or Engineering	1200	40	6	240
05	P.G. Diploma 1 year/2 sem. after any B.D. PG Diploma after 3 year B.D. PG Diploma after 4 year B.D.	1200	40	i-6 ii-6.5	i-240 ii-260
06	Master's Degree 1 year i.e. 2sem after obtaining B.D. (Honours with research)	1200	40	6.5	260
07	Master's Degree 2 year/ 4 sem. after obtaining 3 years B.D.	1200	40	6.5	260
08	Master's Degree 2 year/ 4 sem. after obtaining 3 years B.E. degree.	1200	40	7.0	280
09	Doctoral	1200	40	8.0	320

Various important points about CBCS:

For smooth transaction of CBCS the UGC has formulated guidelines. UGC mentioned "CBCS provides a cafeteria type approach", where few key points are important to understand the easy steps towards achieving successful implementation of CBCS.

1. **Credits deposits:** All student credits must be transferred into an academic bank account within a specific time frame. Choice of courses:
 - A. (I) Core courses: Every academic year's semester may include a core course. To finish the program, the learner must complete this course.
 - A. (II) Elective Courses: This course may be selected from areas other than the core discipline, or it may be discipline-centric.
 - B. (III) Compulsory Foundation Courses: This course will lead for knowledge enhancement of the learner.
 - C. (IV) Elective Foundation courses: This course will be for value based.

3. Examination and Assessment:

I. Letter grades and grade points: Either grades will be assigned to the learner or the marks will be converted into letter grades and then into grade points.

II. 10 points grading system will be followed:

Sr. No.	Abbreviation	Name	Score
01	O	Outstanding	10
02	A +	Excellent	9
03	A	very good	8
04	B +	Good	7
05	B	above average	6
06	C	Average	5
07	P	Pass	4
08	F	Fail	0
09	AB	Absent	0

4. Computation of SGPA and CGPA:

SGPA: SGPA stands for Semester Grade Point Average (or Sessional Grade Point Average). At the end of the semester or session, it calculates the overall scores and credits. It is the ratio of the total number of credits obtained to the grade points earned in each course, as well as the total number of credits earned in all of the courses taken by the student.

$$SGPA = \frac{\sum (C_i \times G_i)}{\sum C_i}$$

C_i = no. of credits of course

G_i = no. of grade points attained by students

CGPA: Cumulative Grade Point Average is the full version of CGPA. In order to assign an A, B, C, D, or F grade to a student, schools and colleges employ the CGPA to assess their overall academic success. It is the ratio of SGPA and total no. of credits of that semester.

$$CGPA = \frac{\sum (C_i \times S_i)}{\sum C_i}$$

S_i = SGPA of the semester

C_i = total no of credits in that semester

Why CBCS? This method substitutes the paper system with a credit system, the marks system with grade points, and the yearly system with consistent semesters and academic years. Various benefits of this method are discussed below:

1. Higher education can be more student-centered and personalized when the credit system is mixed with electives rather than having a largely set curriculum.
2. For students who are unsure of their long-term ambitions, it also offers short-term objectives and performance standards.
3. Credit system boosts pass rate: (“The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ The World Bank, 1992”)
 - i. Ngee Ann Polytechnic’s switches to American type of academic credit system have resulted in its students getting higher percentage of passes.
 - ii. Students at Singapore Polytechnic who fail a semester don't have to wait a year to try again; they can continue even as they finish the first semester's modules.
 - iii. At Temarek Polytechnic the credit system has helped to enhance the average pass rate to 85%.
 - iv. Marine Engineering and Nautical Studies department has improved 10% of overall pass rate.
4. Responsiveness: Compared to systems with fixed curricula, credit systems typically make it simpler to start new courses, allowing higher education institutions to quickly modify their curricula in response to shifting market conditions.
5. Transferability: One more advantage of the credit system is that it allows students to transfer between institutions, which help people reach their full potential by letting them go from one school to another based on their goals and skills. The World Bank document 1992 quoted that, in 1988 approximately 57% of students had sent as transfer students from local private colleges to US for university education. Higher education

institutions can create twinning and transfer programs by using the credit system in India.

6. Increasing internal efficiency: The assessment and evaluation in credit system is based on courses, opposite to 'failure and exit' system of traditional method. In Indonesia, a good example of impact of credit system can be seen where credit system has been most effective in raising internal efficiency.
7. Increased Learning effectiveness: Students who take a semester-long course experience less exam anxiety. It offers an ongoing review procedure. In the instance of Senegal's "Ance Blanche" period, student unrest led to the closure of the University of Dakar for the full academic year. This system makes everyone busy and provides no time for idleness.

Other strength of credit system according to Education and Employment Division Population and Human Resource Dept. of the World Bank, July 1992 are as follows:

- a. The credit system adds such flexibility that students can earn the course credits even breaking in to segments.
- b. The use credit system allows twinning and transfer programs to be developed in HEIs. Students are free to choose one part of the degree in one country and the other in others.
- c. In this system failure in one course doesn't hinder overall progress because students have the option to choose repetition of course or to elect course instead, while sending in next sem.
- d. This system provides a linkage between the departments and universities.
- e. The system is more suitable as for as concerned with budget constraints.

Weakness of the credit system:

- a. The credit system may produce fragmentation of knowledge.
- b. Similar credits for different courses may decrease the scholarly value.
- c. Abraham Flexner (1968) criticizes this system calling it as "an abominable system".

- d. Chester E. Finn, Junior says, “we’ll give you three semester credits just for being a grown up.”
- e. Credit transferability is not constantly guaranteed.

After observing the above points and facts about CBCS we can say that this system stands in the favour of learner. Undoubtedly, a small number of issues will exist prior to institutions in a varied nation like India. A student can earn credits from one institute and then transfer to another for a degree. Institute B is responsible for ensuring that both general and specialised education outcomes are met when conferring degrees. A learner who fails to maintain the necessary attendance in one topic must reappear only for that subject in order to complete the full course. CBCS we can say is not the best medium but considering the benefits of it seems to be a better way to progress. With the right implementation and input from the locations where this system has been scheduled, we can manage it more effectively.

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