



International Journal of Literacy and Education

E-ISSN: 2789-1615
P-ISSN: 2789-1607
Impact Factor: 5.69
IJLE 2024; 4(1): 41-45
www.educationjournal.info
Received: 19-11-2023
Accepted: 23-12-2023

Rajkumar Mondal
Ph.D., Scholar, Department of
Education, Swami
Vivekananda University,
Barrackpore, West Bengal,
India

Dr. Liton Mallick
Assistant Professor,
Department of Education,
Swami Vivekananda
University, West Bengal, India

Choice Based Credit System (CBCS): A new reforms of curriculum and evaluation in higher education

Rajkumar Mondal and Dr. Liton Mallick

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22271/27891607.2024.v4.i1a.163>

Abstract

The ability of a nation to develop is purely dependent on its human resource base, and excellent education produces good human resources. People can ponder on social, cultural, moral, economic, and spiritual issues through education, which also promotes progress through the spread of specialised knowledge and competencies. Enhancing knowledge, growing abilities, boosting confidence, and having a beneficial impact on students' lives are all made possible by high-quality education. It gives students the tools they need to advance both personally and professionally and builds a strong basis for both. Higher education institutions need to concentrate on striking a balance between teaching and developing students' skills by giving them the freedom to pursue a variety of subjects in order to guarantee high-quality instruction. For this National Knowledge Commission and the Eleventh Five-Year Plan suggested numerous changes in curriculum and evaluation system in Indian higher education sector. University Grand Commission (UGC) has mandated the implementation of choice-based credit system (CBCS) in all undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) courses under the XI plan of higher education, following a protracted debate among educationists and specialists in relevant sectors. Through a choice-based credit system, students can study at their own pace and select courses from a list of elective, core, and soft skills courses. The assessment is graded using a credit system that is linked to the different course components that the students are offered. The main concept is to consider student demands in order to stay updated with advancements in higher education both domestically and internationally. The goal of the choice-based credit system (CBCS) is to modernize the curriculum in line with the educational globalization and liberalization trends. It not only creates outlets for learning but also makes learning objectives and goals accessible.

Keywords: Educations, CBCS, universities and colleges

Introduction

Every nation's economic, social, and cultural development are greatly influenced by its level of education. The development of a nation is greatly aided by education. One important instrument that helps build a progressive and developed country is education. In India, colleges and universities are primarily used to deliver higher education. The majority of Indian colleges and universities use a grading system based on percentages or marks. The majority of them have just lately switched to a semester system in order to comply with global educational standards. But the youth that come out of our current educational system lack values, skills, knowledge, and confidence. It might be as a result of the traditional educational system's total lack of connection between education, job, and skill development. The current concerning state of affairs demands that the education system be transformed and/or redesigned. This entails not only implementing innovations but also creating a "learner centric approach" throughout the entire education delivery mechanism and internationally recognised assessment system.

For a country to develop, education is essential, especially higher education. In India, there have been several changes made to the higher education system. The Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) is one such reform. The 11th five-year plan of the University Grand Commission (UGC) in India recently implemented the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) as a reform at the university level. Because higher education in India is so complicated, the primary goal of adopting the CBCS was to standardise curriculum and assessment procedures across all universities and colleges. There exist notable distinctions between central, state, and private universities concerning the curriculum, assessment framework, physical infrastructure, instructor qualifications and appointment protocols, and student employability. Therefore, the CBCS was viewed as a significant step since it was assumed that by developing a national curriculum that is consistent across the board, it could address

Correspondence Author;
Dr. Liton Mallick
Assistant Professor,
Department of Education,
Swami Vivekananda
University, West Bengal, India

problems and obstacles encountered in higher education institutions. In a number of universities, the CBCS was launched between 2015 and 2016. In order to optimise skill-based education and improve student learning results concerning both grades and skills, the National Education Policy (NEP - 2020) has implemented several significant modifications to India's conventional teaching-learning framework. The best lessons are the freedom to choose your subjects and the importance of a diverse education. In order to provide the best educational experience for students who are focused on their careers in the twenty-first century, the government has chosen to implement the novel idea of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) in conjunction with CBCS.

Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to:

1. Discover the basic features of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).
2. Find out the key points of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).
3. Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).
4. Analyse the status of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).
5. Find out the revision of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in NEP-2020

Methodology

The nature of this research study is qualitative.

Basic Features of CBCS

In order to create India as envisioned in its Constitution—a democratic, just, socially conscious, cultured, and compassionate nation respecting liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice for all—and to advance human and societal well-being, higher education is crucial. It is mentioned that “given the 21st century requirements, quality higher education must aim to develop good, thoughtful, well-rounded, and creative individuals” They facilitate in-depth study of one or more specialist areas of interest. Additionally, they help build skills in a variety of fields, such as the social sciences, sciences, arts, humanities, languages, professional, technical, and vocational topics. But before 2015. The old system of higher education involved an uneven performance evaluation system that imposed too much pressure on students to do well at the end of their studies. This resulted in graduates who lacked values, knowledge, skills, confidence, and overall academic efficiency. The appalling state of the Indian higher education system today necessitates reform and transformation through the introduction and creation of innovations, the development of a learner-centered approach, and the implementation of an internationally recognised evaluation system. The grading systems used by the majority of Indian universities and colleges are based on marks or percentages, which is impeding student mobility and preventing them from switching to other schools to pursue their selected subjects or courses. This means that a flexible educational system is needed to enable students to pursue a variety of professional and non-professional courses based on their preferences. For this reason, the University Grant Commission (UGC) has mandated the implementation of the choice-based credit system (CBCS) in all undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) courses

under the XI plan of Higher Education, following a protracted debate among educationists and professionals in relevant sectors. Many universities and autonomous institutions have previously adopted the same, according to a 2014 report by (Kelkar, A.S. & Ravishankar, L.); Mumbai University made it mandatory in 2011 All UG and PG programmed switched to a credit-based system by 2013. The following are the primary goals of UGC's introduction of these programmed: Higher education improvements are necessary, as are improved learning opportunities and learner matching scholastic needs and aspirations; interuniversity transferability of learners; improvement in quality of education and excellence; greater flexibility to complete the course; standardization and comparability of educational programmes across the country.

In order to reduce increasing gap between undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and to enhance employability the Choice Based Credit System was implemented in 2015-2016 onwards in all Universities and Colleges in India by UGC, provide a paradigm shift in the national education policy seeking the uniformity and excellence in higher education and the proposed curriculum under this system endeavours to empower students and help them in their pursuit for achieving overall excellence. That is why, in this curriculum emphasis are not only given on the core papers but on the elective papers also for the honours as well as general courses.

Following are the main features of the CBCS programme

Uniformity: CBCS provides a uniform curriculum and evaluation system in higher education to all central and state and other recognised universities. It aims in removing all disparities across colleges and universities.

Semesterisation: This programme allows semester system, which reduce the burden and anxiety of students and accelerate learning opportunities.

Interdisciplinary approach: This system adopts an interdisciplinary approach to learning. It enables integration of concepts, theories, techniques and perspectives from two or more disciplines. It cut down the boundaries of different discipline.

Flexibility: CBCS is a kind of flexible programme. Both students as well as institutions are enjoying this flexibility in designing curriculum, assigning credit based on course content and hour of institution. This system offers more flexibility to the students by allowing them to choose interdisciplinary (known as Extra-Departmental papers) courses along with major courses, which makes education broader based. It is also helpful to the learners to choose courses and papers as per their choice and interest. Providing opportunity to transfer the credits earned at one institution to another. Provide more transparency and compatibility between different educational structures. It promotes mobility of learners from one institution to another one. CBCS provides greater flexibility with multiple exits, multiple pathways, and vertical mobility.

Student centred education: This system is based on student centric approach. Learners' ability, interest, capacity and needs are in primary concern of this programme.

Multidisciplinary curriculum: CBCS provides multidisciplinary curriculum for all students of UG, PG, Certificate, Diploma and Degree courses in all universities. This approach will bring professional excellence in education.

Learning by earning credit: Earning credit is the main point of this system. Each course is assigned a certain credit. When the student passes that course, he earns the credits which are based on that course. If a student passes a single course in a semester, he does not have to repeat that course later. The students can earn credits according to his pace. Students have to earn these credits in terms of class hours. Normally one credit is equal to one class hour per week.

Continuous and comprehensive evaluation: There is a continuous evaluation of the student not only by the teachers but also by the student himself. According to UGC in this system students are assessed through internally as well as externally.

Transferability: This system providing opportunity to transfer the credits earned at one institution to another. Provide more transparency and compatibility between different educational structures. It promotes mobility of learners from one institution to another one. Even he/she can trans his earned credit to next semester in case of any problem. This transfer may be horizontal as well as vertical.

Grade: CBCS provide advantages of moving away from numerical marking to grading. Grading provides a more realistic assessment of the learner. Stigma of ‘fail’ is minimized in grading. Grading enables the use of “absolute” and “relative” grading depending upon the context. The grade system is allowed internationally.

Holistic approach: For the academic excellence of students in higher education CBCS provides a holistic approach to education. This will foster creativity, research ability, values and ethics, leadership quality and social exposer in students. It will bring quality and excellence to institutions.

Cafeteria approach: The choice-based credit system provides a “cafeteria” type approach in which the students and their choices are at the central point. The student can take courses of their choice, learn at their own pace, undergo additional courses and acquire more than the required credits, and adopt an interdisciplinary approach to learning.

Courses under Choice Based Credit System

1. Core Course (C): A course, which should compulsorily be studied by a candidate as a core requirement is

termed as a Core course.

2. Elective Course: Generally, a course which can be chosen from a pool of courses and which may be very specific or specialized or advanced or supportive to the discipline/subject of study or which provides an extended scope or which enables an exposure to some other discipline/subject/domain or nurtures the candidate’s proficiency/skill is called an Elective Course.
 - Discipline Specific Elective (DSE) Course: Elective courses may be offered by the main discipline/subject of study is referred to as Discipline Specific Elective. The University/Institute may also offer discipline related Elective courses of interdisciplinary nature (to be offered by main discipline/subject of study).
 - Dissertation/Project: An elective course designed to acquire special/advanced knowledge, such as supplement study/support study to a project work, and a candidate studies such a course on his own with an advisory support study to a project work, and a candidate studies such a course on his own with an advisory support by a teacher/faculty member is called dissertation/project.
 - Generic Elective (GE) Course An elective course chosen generally from an unrelated discipline/subject, with an intention to seek exposure is called a Generic Elective P.S.: A core course offered in a discipline/subject may be treated as an elective by other discipline/subject and vice versa and such electives may also be referred to as Generic Elective.
3. Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC): The Ability Enhancement (AE) Courses may be of two kinds: Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC) and Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC). “AECC” courses are the courses based upon the content that leads to knowledge enhancement; i. Environmental Science and ii. English/MIL Communication. These are mandatory for all disciplines. SEC courses are value-based and/or skill-based and are aimed at providing hands-on-training, competencies, skills etc.
 - Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC): Environmental Science, English Communication/MIL Communication.
 - Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC): These courses may be chosen from a pool of courses designed provide value-based and/or skill-based knowledge.

Scheme for Choice Based Credit System

Table 1: System in B.A./B.Sc./B.Com. Honours

Course Components	B.A.		B.SC		B.COM	
	Honours	General	Honours	General	Honours	General
Core Course	14	8	14	12	14	8
Ability Enhancement Compulsory Course (AECC) [Core]	-	4	-	-	-	4
Discipline specific Elective (DSE) Course	4	4	4	6	4	4
Ability Enhancement Compulsory Course (AECC)	2	2	2	2	2	2
Generic Elective (GE)Course	4	2	4	-	4	2
Skill Enhancement Course (SEC)	2	4	2	4	2	4

Qualifying Marks of a paper/Course of B.Sc./B.A./B.Com. Honours: A student requires to score minimum 40% marks in each paper to qualify.

Qualifying Grade for a semester B.Sc./B.A./B.Com. General: A student requires to score minimum 30% marks in each paper to qualify.

Revision of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in NEP-2020

The NEP 2020 envisages the revision of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) for instilling innovation and flexibility. It also envisages setting up of facilitative norms for issues, such as credit transfer, equivalence, etc., and moving towards a criterion-based grading system that assesses student achievement based on the learning goals for each programme, and moving away from high-stakes examinations towards more continuous and comprehensive evaluation. The policy supports the establishment of an Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) which would digitally store the academic credits earned from various recognized HEIs so that the degrees from an HEI can be awarded taking into account the credits earned.

Transformative initiatives that have a bearing on the four-year undergraduate Programme

The NEP envisages several transformative initiatives in higher education. These include:

- Introducing holistic and multidisciplinary undergraduate education that would help develop all capacities of human beings-intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, ethical and moral - in an integrated manner; soft skills, such as complex problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, communication skills; and rigorous specialization in a chosen field (s) of learning.
- Adoption of flexible curricular structures in order to enable creative combinations of disciplinary areas for study in multidisciplinary contexts that would also allow flexibility in course options that would be on offer to students, in addition to rigorous specialisation in a subject or subject
- Undergraduate degree programs of either 3 or 4-year duration, with multiple entry and exit points and re-entry options within this period, with appropriate certifications such as:
 - A certificate after completing 1 year (2 semesters) of study in the chosen fields of study,
 - A diploma after 2 years (4 semesters) of study,
 - A bachelor's degree after a 3-year (6 semesters) programme of study,
 - A bachelor's degree with honours after a 4-year (eight semesters) programme of study or a bachelor's degree with research after a 4-year (Eight semesters) programme of study if the student completes a rigorous research project in their major area(s) of study.
- The 4-year multidisciplinary bachelor's degree programme is considered a preferred option since it would allow the opportunity to experience the full range of holistic and multidisciplinary education in addition to a focus on the chosen major and minors as per the choices of the student.
- Flexibility in the designs and lengths/duration of master's degree programmes-
 - A 2-year master's degree programme with the second year devoted entirely to research for those who have completed the 3-year bachelor's degree programme;
 - A 1-year master's degree programme for students who have completed a 4-year Bachelor's degree programme with research.
 - Undertaking a doctoral programme of study is expected to require either a master's degree or a 4-year bachelor's degree with Research.
 - Master's and doctoral programmes, while providing rigorous research-based specialization, also to provide opportunities for multidisciplinary work, including in academia, government, research institutions, and industry.
 - Inclusion in the curricula of credit-based courses and projects in the areas of community engagement and service, environmental education, and value-based education.
 - Environment education to include areas such as climate change, pollution, waste management, sanitation, conservation of biological diversity, management of biological resources and biodiversity, forest and wildlife conservation, and sustainable development and living.
 - Value-based education to include the development of humanistic, ethical, Constitutional, and universal human values of truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, nonviolence, scientific temper, citizenship values, and life-skills.
 - Lessons in service and participation in community service programmes to be an integral part of the holistic education.
 - Global Citizenship Education and education for sustainable development to form an integral part of the curriculum to empower learners to become aware of and understand global and sustainable development issues and to become active promoters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable societies.
 - Students to be provided with opportunities for internships with local industry, businesses, artists, crafts persons, etc., as well as research internships with faculty and researchers at their own or other HEIs/research institutions, so that students may actively engage with the practical side of their learning and, as a by-product, further improve their employability.
 - Reorienting teaching programmes to ensure the development of capabilities across a range of disciplines including sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, languages, as well as vocational subjects. This would involve offering programmes/courses of study relating to Languages, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Art, Dance, Theatre, Statistics, Pure and Applied Sciences, Sports etc., and other such subjects needed for a multidisciplinary and stimulating learning environment.
 - Preparing professionals in cutting-edge areas that are fast gaining prominence, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), 3-D machining, big data analysis, and machine learning, in addition to genomic studies, biotechnology, nanotechnology, neuroscience, with important applications to health, environment, and sustainable living that will be woven into undergraduate education for enhancing the employability of the youth".

References

1. Biswas RA, Islam S. Introduction of CBCS in Higher Education in India. IISRR-International Journal of Research. 2021, 7. Spl. Issue-1 of WB State University, February 9, 2021, ISSN- 2394-885X.
2. Biswas S. Choice-based credit system: An analytical study. International Journal of Research and Analytical Study. 2018;5(3):1362-1368.
3. Chahal D, Manan MM. Attitude towards choice-based credit system of postgraduate level students in higher education: A study on the central university of Haryana. Sambad: e-Journal. 2017;6(2):163-193.
4. Chaudhary C. Assessment of adoption of Choice Based Credit System by India Universities. International Journal of Behavioural and Movement Sciences. 2012;1(2):45-49.
5. Chaubey AK. Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS): A Better Choice in Education System. International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts, 2015, 3(6).
6. Deuri C. Attitude towards Choice Based Credit System of Post Graduate Level Students in Higher Education: A Study on Gauhati University. International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Culture (IJIRSSC). 2015;1(2):115-122.
7. Dutta I, Dutta N. Choice Based Credit System: An Academic Reform in Higher Education. UNIVERSITY NEWS. 2013;51(8):6-13. ISSN: 0566 2257.
8. Hasan M, Parvez M. Choice-Based Credit System in India: Pros and Cons. Journal of Education and Practice. 2015;6(25):30-33.
9. Howlader T, Roy B. Attitude of Undergraduate Students towards Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in Relation to Their Academic Achievements. International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT). 2021, 9(2). February 2021, ISSN:2320-2882.
10. Kaur A, Sharma M. Academic Curriculum Reform of Indian Higher Education: Choice Based Credit System (CBCS). International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Technology. 2016;3(1):78-80.
11. Kelkar AS, Ravishankar L. Choice-based credit system: boon or bane? Current Science. 2014;107(8):1230.
12. Kumar SP, Mishra S. Perception of Undergraduate Students towards Implementation of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in India. *Razvitie obrazovania = Development of education*. 2021;4(2):54-64. DOI 10.31483/r-98563.
13. Ministry of Education, Government of India. Report of the Education Commission (1964-66): Education and National Development. Government of India Press; c1966. Available from
14. Mal S, Mahato U. Attitude towards choice based credit system (CBCS) of undergraduate level students in Higher Education: A study on degree colleges under Shidho-Kanho-Birsha University in West Bengal. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research. 2021;10, 1(6). 2021. ISSN:2277.
15. Manikumar KA. Proposition for Nationwide Choice Based Credit System. University News. 2015;53(12):3-5.
16. Mishra SP. Introduction of Choice Based Credit System: A New Paradigm Shift in Higher Education. An International Peer Reviewed & Referred Scholarly Research Journal for Humanity Science & English Language. 2017;4(21):4869-4877. Available from
17. Naidu BVR. Choice Based Credit System in India: A critical evaluation. International Journal of Academic Research. 2016;2(2):77-87.
18. Saha T. Problems and Prospects of Implementing CBCS at UG Level in West Bengal. International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR). 2021, 10(1). January 2021, ISSN:2319-7064, SJIF (2019): 7.583.
19. Sarkar A. Attitude of Undergraduate Teachers and Students Towards Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) – A Study on Basanti Devi College, Kolkata. Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR). 2019, 6(5). May 2019, ISSN – 2349 5162.
20. Tazien W. Choice Based Credit System in India: A Critical Review of Literature. The Scholar. 2017;1(4):7-21. Available from
21. UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice Based Credit System. Available from