



IMPLEMENTING CBCS AT HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

India has had higher aspirations about concerning higher education. Since the Indian independence Government has adopted various measures to enhance the quality of higher education in India. CBCS is one such measure in the higher education field. At the international education level, both Choice-based education and Credit-based education have gained higher significance. It is predicted that in the near future, the whole world education shall incline towards Choice-based and Credit-based education. This article discusses the significance, important terms, and concepts, computation of SGPA & CGPA grading system of CBCS.

KEY WORDS: Course, Credits, Grade, Credit Point.

INTRODUCTION

Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) is a progressive reform in the education system. In the Choice Based Credit System, the extent of understanding of a learner is graded in terms of credits. In this system, the students are given sufficient autonomy to choose the courses of a programme and also the rate of learning of a programme. Therefore, the CBCS is based on choice as well as credit.

The system of "National Education in India started during 1960", only after the formation of The Education Commission (1964-66). After independence, the government of India has taken many affirmative actions in all walks of human life in general and in the education field in particular to raise the quality of life of the people of the nation. Without such measures, India would not have been raised to the present level of progressed Nation. The CBCS is a systematic technique of evaluation process in the field of education that is paralleled with the National System of Education is one such radical change in the Education field. CBCS can be called as a common pattern of evaluation or a common framework of evaluation. CBCS is an attempt to make the assessment process standardized or put the assessment strategies and techniques of the country under the same roof of evaluation.

In the CBCS format, credit or contact hour is the measuring parameter of learning. CBCS can be considered as a strategy for scaling of learning system for its better assessment and its other adoptability. CBCS is very closely related to Semester type of evaluation. A Semester System is a must for implementation of CBCS; however, it can run in the absence of CBCS. Currently, steps have been exercised to introduce CBCS at the higher education institution or University level. In the future, measures will be taken to implement the same at the school level too. It is predicted that in the coming day evaluation process, CBCS will play a dominant role.

NEED FOR CBCS

The only way to improve the educational transaction is through continuous up-gradation and bringing innovative changes both in teaching and Evaluation. We need to remove the older ways of doing things, which are outdated and irrelevant and bring inappropriate strategies and methods to the system of

Education. The Education system should not stagnate; it must be continuously revived and recharged according to the changing needs of society. One such innovative change is the adoption of CBCS at higher education level in all the universities coming under university grants commission in our country. The researches done by some researchers are evidence to support the adoption of CBCS at higher education institutions in India. Few research findings which highlight the need and significance of CBCS are worth mentioning here.

Sumitha P.V., Krishnamurthy M.G., Winfred Baretto Royce (2016) concludes that “the students perceive the CBCS to be learner-centric, which provides student autonomy/freedom and has clarity in evaluation with clear syllabi and adequate college resources providing all-round development of students. Thus CBCS will enable the smooth transition from a teacher-centric system to a student-centric regime. This, in turn, will develop the programme to be industry sensitive and tailor-made to meet corporate needs. The prevailing richness in academic tradition must be retained in spirit while allowing the academic framework to cater to a fast-paced technology-based system.”

Nil Ratan Roy, Umme Khadiza Khanam & Tribeni Devi (2013) concludes that the Choice Based Credit System is highly required for Higher Education. This system promotes sincerity among the teacher as well as the students. It has improved the academic career of the students who were not even much sincere and good percentage holder. In CBCS, the period time which can be allotted for increased so that the course of study can be systematically acquired by the student. Betterment systems should be introduced because the students can better their performance”.

Aithal P.S., Suresh Kumar P.M. (2016), “the apex body of higher education in India the UGC has always initiated measures to bring efficiency and excellence in the Higher Education System. The basic purpose is to expand academic quality in all aspects, right from the curriculum to the learning-teaching process to examination and evaluation systems. In contrast to this, multiple techniques are followed by different universities across the country in examination, evaluation, and grading system. Considering this diversity, the adoption of the choice-based credit system seems to be qualitatively superior even though it is not to be considered as ultimate”.

The researches conducted on CBCS strongly propose the introduction of CBCS at all the higher education institutions. It shifts the focus from the teacher-centric to student-centric education. Students will be given better exposure and networking through attending the course in many colleges across the country and abroad. CBCS offers education broad-based and at par with international standards. One can get benefits by combining unique combinations. But there are difficulties in framing the syllabus, motivating and training the staff. Students and parents also have to be made aware of the significance of attendance, continuous assessment and semester system. The Academic board of the respective universities and institutions have to plan measures to overcome these difficulties. In this background, there is a need for the academic fraternity at higher education level must be adequately equipped with the thorough knowledge, techniques, and strategies about the CBCS.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CBCS

- **Uniform Pattern of Evaluation:** CBCS adopts a uniform system of evaluation across institutions. This provides an opportunity for the students to move across the institutions without any difficulty.
- **Quantification of Learning Process:** Quantification of the learning process is one more important feature of CBCS. Credit is a Unit of measuring Coursework or Course of learning in the CBCS. The entire coursework is converted into some credits and based on credits earned at different levels by a student and grading is assigned to the students.
- **Meets the Global Needs of Evaluation in Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) Era:** In the era of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) there is a need of migration of students, employers, employees and scholars from one corner to another corner of the world. The CBCS is easy to

understand, so it facilitates the migration of students, employers, employees, and scholars at the international level.

- **Mobility of Students to Different Institutions within and across Countries:** CBCS follows a common standard guideline for learning as well as evaluation across the institution, so, it becomes easier on the part of students to move from one institution to another institution across the country as well as across the different parts of the world.
- **Learner Centred Learning:** CBCS is a flexible method of learning and evaluation. It provides learner-centred learning in terms of
 - A) *Choice of Courses*
 - B) *Pace of Learning*
 - C) *Design of Syllabus, etc.*

In this system, the learners have the freedom to choose the courses of learning from their discipline or from other disciplines. In addition to this, the learners learn at their own pace. CBCS model allows for a flexible approach to curriculum design.

- **Cafeteria approach:** When the customers sit in a cafeteria, they can choose and order the dish as per their need and requirement. In the CBCS system, also a student can choose the courses as per his/her interest and demand. In this model, a learner is given the freedom to choose the courses of his/her learning across the discipline, starting from intra-discipline to inter-discipline. For example, a student of a Language Programme can also take a course of physics or chemistry if desires so in respect of completing the Language Programme
- **The complete programme of Learning and Evaluation:** CBCS aims at the holistic or total development of a learner. It not only offers the core courses and ability development courses to the learners but also offers elective courses to the learners. The main objective of including elective courses in a programme is to help the students to attain their varied interests and creativity through their learning. In this system, apart from external assessment, there is enough scope for internal assessment, touching the different dimensions of behaviour. Therefore, this evaluation system is quite comprehensive and continuous.
- **Shifting Focus from Traditional Approach of Marking to Grading System:** The conventional methods of evaluation are either based upon marking system or grading system or both. In the traditional method of evaluation, there are different patterns of marking and grading among different institutions, and such patterns of marking and grading are not easily perceived and interpreted by the stakeholders of education and many other personnel, including employers. But, CBCS is a paradigm shift in the process of evaluation, where the marks are converted into grades and a uniform grading system is adopted across the institution. Therefore, the system is widely appreciated all over the world.
- **Helps the Employer to understand the competency and knowledge of Students for selecting them in Different Jobs:** In CBCS, a common format or rule is followed for scaling the coursework as well as assessing the performance of the learner. The common format for the coursework is credit and the common format for assessing the achievement is grade or grading system. So, it will be easier for the employer to understand the competency and knowledge of students for selecting them for different jobs under CBCS format.

IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS IN CBCS

- **Course:** As per the CBCS format, a Programme is categorized into Courses. A Course in CBCS is equated to a 'Paper' in a conventional system of Education. The Courses may or may not carry equal weights. For example, a Course maybe with 7 credits, another Course maybe with 5 credits, another Course maybe 3 credits and so on.
- **Credit:** Credit is the unit or measuring scale for measuring Coursework or learning. Credit determines the number of hours of teaching per week in a semester. One Credit Course denotes-

- a) One-hour teaching of Theory Courses per week, or
- b) Two hours teaching of Practical Courses per week.

Courses in Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)

CBCS offers three categories of courses offered. They are-

- **Core Courses:** These are the important Courses, the information of which is very significant for a student of a particular Programme. These courses are compulsory for all the students of a particular Programme.
- **Elective Courses:** Elective Courses are Optional Courses. Elective Courses are selected as per the choice and need of the students. There are two types of elective courses.

i) **Discipline-specific Elective Courses:** Elective Courses chosen from the same discipline of the programme.

ii) **Generic Elective Courses:** The Courses selected from the disciplines other than the discipline of the Programme.

- **Ability Enhancement Courses:** Ability enhancement or skill enhancement is a basic requirement for the learner now a day for their adjustment of life as well as for their employment.

CBCS facilitates the students by providing the courses mentioned above.

Grading System under CBCS Pattern

- **Letter Grade:** The letter used for scaling the performance of a student in Course constitutes letter grade for the Course. CBCS grades the students by using the letter grades like O, A+, A, B+, B, C, and P. A student's performance is assessed on a ten-point scale under CBCS using these letter grades.
- **Grade Point:** It is a numerical value given to each letter grade on a ten-point scale. The Grade points of the different letter grades are like this-

Letter Grades	Grade Points
O	10
A ⁺	9
A	8
B ⁺	7
B	6
C	5
P	4
F	0
AB	0

- **Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA):** The performance of a candidate in a semester is expressed by SGPA. It is the ratio of total credit points secured by a learner in various courses registered in a semester and total course credits taken during that semester. The numerical value of SGPA is calculated up to two decimal points.
- **Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA):** The total performance of a candidate in all the semesters is denoted by it. It is the ratio of total Credit points secured by a candidate in various courses in all the semesters and arithmetic total credits of all courses in all the semesters. The numerical value of CGPA is mentioned up to two decimal points.

Computation of CGPA and SGPA

Computation of SGPA

Course	Credit	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Credit Point (Credit X Grade)
Course 1	3	A	8	3 x 8 =24
Course 2	4	B ⁺	7	4 x 7 = 28
Course 3	3	B	6	3 x 6 =18
Course 4	3	O	10	3 x 10 = 30
Course 5	4	C	5	4 x 5 = 20
Course 6	4	B	6	4 x 6 = 24
	21			144

$SGPA (S_i) = \sum (C_i \times G_i) / \sum C_i$

where C_i is the number of credits of the i th (or in a particular) course and G_i is the grade point scored by the student in the i th course

Thus, $SGPA = 144/21 = 6.85$

Computation of CGPA

SEMESTER 1	SEMESTER 2	SEMESTER 3	SEMESTER 4	SEMESTER 5	SEMESTER 6
Credit: 21 SGPA:6.8	Credit: 24 SGPA:7.8	Credit: 25 SGPA: 5.6	Credit: 26 SGPA:6.0	Credit: 26 SGPA:6.3	Credit: 25 SGPA: 8.0

$CGPA = \sum (C_i \times S_i) / \sum C_i$

where

S_i is the SGPA of the i th ((or in a particular)) semester

and

C_i is the total number of credits in that semester.

Thus, $CGPA = \frac{21 \times 6.8 + 24 \times 7.8 + 25 \times 5.6 + 26 \times 6.0 + 26 \times 6.3 + 25 \times 8.0}{147} = 6.73$

DEMERITS OF CBCS

- Autonomy and Flexibility of Institutions are limited.
- The Educational System will lose its diversity.
- Over Quantification of the Education System leads to unnatural Education System.
- Cafeteria Approach sometimes facilitates the Odd Combination of Courses or creates Dilemma in Selection of Courses.
- Confuses the Employers, since it puts a large number of Students under a few Letter Grades.

CONCLUSION

Even though some demerits are there in CBCS, it has abundant advantages. So, it needs to be implemented in higher education institutions of our Nation. The implementation of CBCS in higher education institutions is a policy of the UGC. Since the institution is required to be ready with all the resources needed for introducing and implementing it, the institutional sophistication must be ensured. The institutional readiness for properly implementing CBCS will be possible only by having enough knowledge and understanding about the process of CBCS among all the people involved in the system of Education. Hence it is highly essential to acquire detailed knowledge about CBCS, its terms and procedures.

The CBCS is at a primitive stage, especially in the Indian education field, but it is estimated that it will play an important role in the forthcoming day's learning and evaluation process of the education system.

This system is in the process of creating a bright future for India by preparing good human resources capable of escalating India to an international standard.

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