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## EXAMINATION REFORMS: RELEVANCE OF SEMESTER SYSTEM IN COLLEGES AT UG AND PG LEVEL IN INDIA



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### ABSTRACT

In today's global scenario, the higher education system of a developing nation must seek integration with universal learning. Prof. Yash Pal highlighted the necessity of interdisciplinary approach in education. In current circumstances choice based credit system (CBCS) suggested by UGC is best approach of examination reform in India. Keeping in view ground reality in India semester system should be adopted at P.G. level and in case of professional education and annual examination system is useful at U.G. level.

**KEYWORDS :** *global scenario , higher education system , choice based credit system (CBCS), Society.*



### INTRODUCTION :

Education is the key to success. In today's global scenario the higher education system of a developing nation like ours must seek integration with universal learning. Society, knowledge and economy are no longer local issues but operate in a global environment. In the recent report published in the Tribune dated 11.06.2015 (P-1) 'India slips in Asia Varsity Ranking, China on the top'. The report revealed that India has lost heavily in the latest Asia University Rankings of Times Higher

Education, while China, with the highest number of institutions in Asia's top 100, has replaced Japan as the continent's higher education powerhouse. China has 21 universities in the table followed by Japan with 19, South Korea 13 and India with only nine (one down from 10 last year). Editor Phir Baty credited China's improvement to its sustained investments and industrialization. Panjab University Vice-Chancellor Arun Grover reported, "Majority of the top Asian institutions are research universities, whereas we in India don't care about research. Does India have even one university offering a serious graduate programme that offers an integrated Master's with a PhD in humanities, sciences or technology? Instead of promoting research, the Centre has slashed PhD scholarships. How can you then expect the system to improve?" This ranking is based on 13 indicators including research, teaching, knowledge transfer and international activities. To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the system, assessment of teaching, learning and evaluative process reform is essential. Innovative evaluative process to gauge the knowledge and skill acquired at various levels of programme is the need of the hours.

### **INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN EDUCATION.**

Renowned scientist Prof. Yash Pal while preparing curriculum framework for under graduate education advocated the need for interdisciplinary approach in education. According to him raw curiosity is seldom discipline bound. Infosys also made successful experiment of interdisciplinary approach in recruitment and training in industry. Instead of employing people with engineering degree Infosys employed people belonging to social science and commerce at global level and made them engineers as per their requirement.

### **EVALUATION SYSTEM.**

The examination system, evaluation of answer books and admissions are three areas which need to be streamlined effectively and strictly to enforce academic discipline both at college and university campuses throughout the region. The institution should have sustainable practices in teaching, learning and evaluation which have greatest impact on performance leading to success.

The UGC has desired to introduce uniform grading system called 'Choice based Credit System' (CBCS) to facilitate student's mobility across institutions within and across countries. Earlier UGC recommended 10th point grading system. The choice based credit system provides flexibility in designing curriculum and assigning credit based on the course contents and hours of teaching. In this system the students have freedom to choose course of their choice, learn at their own pace, and undergo additional courses and interdisciplinary approach to learning. It bridges the gap between the liberal and professional education and ensure students mobility horizontal as well as vertical. It offers wide ranging choice for students to opt for courses based on their aptitude and their career goals. Transparency in assessment can be maintained by appointing external examiners from outside the university and in case of practical the team of examiners should be constituted on 50-50% basis. In case of assessment of project report/theses/Dissertations the work can be assigned to internal as well as external examiners. In this system weight age can be given to any important subject in terms of credit hours of teaching.

### **SEMESTER SYSTEM/ ANNUAL EXAMINATION SYSTEM:-**

A recent survey of higher education by economist rates the US model as best in the world. We have tried this model in our IITS, IIMS and in some Indian universities and Colleges by adopting semester system of instruction rather than the traditional annual examination system. The following advantages and disadvantages of the semester system are:-

#### **A. ADVANTAGES:**

- (i) Provision for continuous evaluation and monitoring students progress throughout the year.
- (ii) Engagement of students & teachers throughout the year.
- (iii) Covering of more syllabi in comparison to annual system.
- (iv) More score to students due to division of syllabus in semesters.

#### **B. DISADVANTAGES:-**

- (i) Generally results are not declared in time.
- (ii) Overall development activities for students like NCC, NSS, educational tours, cultural and other curriculum activities take back seat.
- (iii) The system has made the students insensitive to examinations due to increasing back log of semesters.

(iv) Throughout year examinations related activities like examination duties, evaluation work and completion of other formalities have over burdened the teachers who had to perform additional duties of construction, sanitation, local civil administration also which are more specific to college teachers, besides pressure of API score in promotions. All this demoralizes the teachers and hamper their creative approach and result in less care for students in colleges.

### RELEVANCE OF THE SYSTEM.

The semester system is applicable in case of universities and professional institutions where boarding facilities and other infrastructure is rich but it is not fit for college level where there is lack of such facilities. More than sixty percent of students belongs to rural areas and their parents are engaged in priority sector activities like agriculture and small business. They fail to follow the academic calendar and results are absenteeism from classes and other related activities of the college. Primary, secondary and higher education is not separate entities & consider them as an integral part of the whole education system. Ground reality in Haryana shows that the experiment of upgrading student's up to middle level without considering minimum standard has resulted in diluting the academic atmosphere. Secondly due to shortcomings in semester system the government has to reverse its decision of introduction of semester system in phased manner, presently in IXth & XIth standards. The same situation appears in case of introduction of semester system at graduation level in colleges.

### DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS:-

From the above it can be concluded that 'Choice Based Credit System'(CBCS) is better approach in examinations reform in current time. This approach is applicable to both semester as well as annual examination system. Semester system should be adopted at P.G. level where students get matured and also in case of professional courses which are run by professionals. To keep welfare of majority of students, annual examination system should be adopted in case of colleges at U.G. level with strict midterm appraisal of students. Prof. V.N.

Radha Shekhran Pillai, Director NAAC (2003) lamented that about sixty percent colleges in the country do not meet the minimum education standard. The infrastructure in these colleges is outdated and massive over hauling & financial resources in addition to effective manpower are needed to upgrade these institutions.

To strengthen the infrastructure & manpower in education government should implement the recommendation of committees implementing National Education Policy 1968, 1986 and National knowledge Commission to increase investment in education. At present investment in education is around 3% of NI, it should be increased to 6% of NI. The experience of advanced countries reveals that even when per capita income is very high, the burden of education can't be shifted to private sources & parents of students.

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