

# Problems and Prospects of Implementing CBCS at UG Level in West-Bengal

Tanmoy Saha

Research Scholar, Department of Educational Studies, Ramakrishna Mission Sikshanamandira, University of Calcutta, Kolkata-700073, India

Email: jrftanmoy[at]gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The University Grants Commission (UGC) initiated a lot of steps to bring equity, efficiency and academic excellence on Higher Education System in India. These are- innovation and improvement in course- curricula, introduction of paradigm shift in learning, teaching pedagogy, examination and education system (UGC, Minimum Course Curriculum for Undergraduate Course Under Choice Based Credit System, 2014). The UGC introduced a system called Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in 2014 to bring all the higher education institutions under a single Umbrella of grading, learning and standards in India and ordered higher education institutions to follow the system from 2015 onwards. The CBCS gives the flexibility for students to choose inter-disciplinary, intra-disciplinary courses, skill-oriented courses and makes the education broad-based with global standards and others facilities which move from the traditional teacher-centric to student-centric education. Although, there are several problems which obstacle to implementation of CBCS. More attention and discussion are required for the problems and prospects of CBCS to fulfil its objectives. Therefore, the objective of the present paper is to find out the problems and prospects of implementing CBCS at UG level in West-Bengal.*

**Keywords:** Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), UG level, West-Bengal

## 1. Introduction

Education has a prominent role to be a develop country. For this, quality improvement of education in right time is a mandatory condition. Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Govt. of India, developed various Educational Policies for improving education system in India. But some problems are found in higher education system. Lack of knowledge, confidence, values and skills of students are common in Indian present education system. One of the major causes is lack of relationships among education, employment and skill development in traditional education system. Also, all Indian higher education institutions have a lot of variety with traditional evaluation system based on marks or percentages. Modification of education system is needed to bring up flexibility in education system with maintaining global standards by depending upon interests and aims of students choosing interdisciplinary, intra-disciplinary and skill-based courses. So that, University Grants Commission (UGC) announced Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in 2014 to bring all the higher education institutions under a single Umbrella of grading, learning and standards in India and ordered higher education institutions to follow the system from 2015 onwards.

### 1.1 Concept of CBCS

The course purpose to decrease the gap between an undergraduate course and employability. The curriculum helps the students for achieving overall excellence. UGC continuously involves itself to suggest and facilitate the implementation of schemes and programs, which progresses not only the level of academic quality but also progresses the academic and research environment in the country. CBCS purposed to be pupil centric rather than system centric or teacher centric. CBCS attempts to make a complete syllabus for achieving these objectives. It has

focus on a discipline through core papers whether in honours curriculum or a regular curriculum, elective papers have been added which will give opportunity to students the liberty to select the allied/applied/broad areas of their discipline and also the areas of other disciplines of their interest. A special importance has been given to ability enhancement and skill development of students through elective courses under these fields which every student is essential to study. Also, the students will have whole liberty to select these courses from a pool recommended by the UGC/Universities. All papers except core papers suggest whole liberty to the Universities in designing and revising the syllabi (UGC, UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice Based Credit System, 2014). These elective papers offer them with the chance to grow capabilities of students in their areas of strength, expertise and specialization. Although in the core papers under the planned strategies 30% flexibility is anticipated in accepting the syllabus (UGC, UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice Based Credit System, 2014). The existing education policy different institutions are essential to maintain 70% similarity in the syllabi and the same is being sustained under the planned system of CBCS. There is anxiety amongst the faculty from different institutions that with the implementation of CBCS, there will be migration or transfer of the faculty from one institution to another which is far from truth. The CBCS offers a chance to students to select courses such as core, elective and skill-based courses. The courses can be evaluated through grading system which is better than the conventional marking system. It is required to familiarize undeviating grading system which will advantage the pupils to transfer across institutions both within India and across world. UGC suggested to bring the homogeneity in evaluation system and calculation through Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) based on student's performance in examinations (UGC, UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice Based Credit System, 2014).

## 1.2 Group of Courses in CBCS

### 1) Core Course(14 for honours courses, 4 discipline specific papers each for regular courses and 2 papers each for English and Hindi/ MIL in B.A./B. Com):

The papers under this group are to be imparted homogeneously across all universities with 30% eccentricity proposed in the draft. The purpose of core papers is to ensure that all the institutions adheres a minimum common curriculum, so that each institution follows to common minimum standard. A course should mandatorily be studied as a core necessity is termed as a Core course.

### 2) Elective Course

Generally a course which can be selected from a group of courses and which can be very precise or focused or innovative or helpful to the discipline/ subject of study or which offers an lengthy scope or which gives an experience to other discipline/subject/domain or encourages the pupil's proficiency/skill is called an Elective Course.

#### a) Discipline Specific Elective (DSE) Course (4 for honours courses and 2 each for regular courses):

Elective courses prescribed under the key discipline/subject of study are mentioned to as Discipline Specific Elective. Each University has complete freedom to propose their own papers under this group grounded on their expertise, specialization, requirements, scope and necessity. The Institution might also offer discipline associated Elective courses of interdisciplinary nature (to be prescribed by main discipline/subject of study).

#### b) Generic Elective (GE) Course(4 for honours courses and 2 each for B.A./B.Com. regular courses):

It is an elective course selected from a distinct discipline/subject purpose to seek experience beyond discipline/s of choice is named as Generic Elective. The purpose of the group of papers is to suggest the pupils to discover disciplines of interest outside the selections that they make in Core and Discipline Specific Elective papers. The list offered under this group is suggestive in nature and each institution has complete liberty to propose their own papers under the group grounded on their expertise, specialization, requirements, choice and necessity. A core course prescribed in a discipline/subject may be an elective by other discipline/subject and vice versa and such electives may also be mentioned to as Generic Elective. (UGC, Instructional Template for Facilitating Implementation of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), 2015)

**Dissertation/Project:** It is an elective course planned to obtain special/advanced information, such as supplement study/support study to a project work, and a student studies such a course on his own with a recommended support by a teacher/faculty member is named as dissertation/project. Introducing Research Component in Under-Graduate Courses Project work/Dissertation is prescribed as a special course including application of knowledge in resolving / analysing /discovering a real-life condition / difficult problem. A Project/Dissertation work must be of 6 credits. A Project/Dissertation work can be given in exchange of a discipline specific elective paper.

### 3) Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC)

The Ability Enhancement (AE) Courses is two types: Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC) and Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC). "AECC" courses grounded upon the content that purpose to knowledge improvement as Environmental Science and English/ Hindi/ MIL Communication. These are compulsory for all disciplines. SEC courses are value-based and/or skill-based which are objective to providing hands-on-training, competencies, skills, etc.

#### a) Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC):

These are Environmental Science, English Communication/ Hindi Communication/ MIL Communication.

#### b) Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC) (minimum 2 for honours courses and 4 for regular courses):

It is chosen from a group of courses planned to offer value-based and/or skill-based knowledge and should cover both theory and lab/hands-on/training/field work. The core purpose of these courses is to offer students life-skills in hands-on mode so as to rise their employability. The list offered under this group are suggestive in nature and each University has whole liberty to suggest their own papers under this group based on their expertise, specialization, requirements, choice and necessity.

#### Practical/tutorials (One each with every core and discipline/generic specific elective paper):

The practical list offered is suggestive in nature and each university has the liberty to add/subtract/edit practical from the list grounding on their faculty and infrastructure available.

## 1.3 Implementation as Per UGC Guidelines

- 1) The CBCS can be implemented in Central/State Universities and the stakeholders agree to follow common minimum curriculum and syllabi of the core papers and given by the UGC. The permissible deviation from the syllabi being 30 % at the maximum.
- 2) The universities can be permitted to lastly plan their own syllabi for the core and elective papers subject permissible deviation from the syllabi being 30 % at the maximum. UGC could make a group of elective papers also the universities might further improve to the group of elective papers that they want to give opportunity to select as per the facilities available.
- 3) Number of Core papers for all Universities has to be similar for both UG Honours as well as UG regular courses.
- 4) Credit score got by a pupil for any elective paper has to be added in the student's overall score regardless of whether the paper is prescribed by the parent university (degree awarding university/institute) or not.
- 5) For the introducing of AE Courses, they could be separated into two categories: a) AE Compulsory Courses: The universities joining in CBCS system may have common curriculum for these papers. There may be one paper each in the 1st two semesters as follows (i) English/Hindi/MIL Communication, (ii) Environmental Science. b) Skill Enhancement Courses: The universities might choose the papers they may need to offer from a common group of papers offered by UGC or the universities may choose such papers themselves

in addition to the list recommended by UGC. The universities can suggest one paper per semester for these courses (UGC, UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice Based Credit System, 2014).

- 6) The university/Institute might suggest the number of seats per elective paper as per the facility and infrastructure accessible.
- 7) An undergraduate degree with Honours in a discipline might be granted if a pupil completes 14 core papers in that discipline, 2 Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC), minimum 2 Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC) and 4 papers each from a list of Discipline Specific Elective and Generic Elective papers, respectively.
- 8) An undergraduate degree in Science disciplines might be granted if a pupil completes 4 core papers each in three disciplines of choice, 2 Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC), minimum, 4 Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC) and 2 papers each from a list of Discipline Specific Elective papers based on three disciplines of choice selected above, respectively.
- 9) An Undergraduate degree in Humanities/ Social Sciences/ Commerce might be granted if a pupil completes 4 core papers each in two disciplines of choice, 2 core papers each in English and Hindi/MIL, respectively, 2 Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC), minimum 4 Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC), 2 papers each from a list of Discipline Specific Elective papers based on the two disciplines of choice selected above, respectively, and two papers from the list of Generic Electives papers.
- 10) For the purpose of computation of work-load the following mechanism may be adopted: i) 1 Credit = 1 Theory period of one-hour duration, ii) 1 Credit = 1 Tutorial period of one-hour duration, iii) 1 Credit = 1 Practical period of two-hour duration.(UGC, UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice Based Credit System, 2014)
- 11) The CBCS Committee suggested that after implementing the CBCS for under-graduate courses in Universities/Colleges/Institutes for one academic session UGC should review the course structure and syllabi in order to correct variances, if any, based on the feedback from stakeholders.
- 12) The Universities/Institutes can suggest any number of selections of papers from different disciplines under Generic Elective and Discipline Specific Elective as per the availability of the courses/faculty.
- 13) Universities/Institutes can develop a system/policy about Extra Curricular Activities/ General Interest and Hobby Courses/ Sports/ NCC/NSS/Vocational courses/ related courses on their own choices.
- 14) A pupil can choose for a larger number of Elective and AE Elective papers than proposed under the model curriculum of UGC. However, the total credit score got will not more than 160 credits for UG Honours and 140 credits for UG degree.(UGC, Minimum Course Curriculum for Undergraduate Course Under Choice Based Credit System, 2014)

#### 1.4 Objective

To find out the implementation problems of CBCS at UG level in West-Bengal faced by the students and teachers.

#### 1.5 Research Questions

Are the students and teachers have concrete knowledge about CBCS?

What are the implementation problems of CBCS at UG level faced by the students and teachers?

## 2. Methodology

The present study was carried out through descriptive survey method.

The population of the study was all the U.G students and teachers under CBCS in West-Bengal. The present study will be conducted on a sample of 500 students and 100 teachers from the colleges in West-Bengal.

Purposive sampling technique was taken for selection of sample. Questionnaire was used by the researcher to collect the data from students and teachers.

## 3. Findings

After the collection of data from students it was found that the following Table No 1 represents the percentage of **students** who have/have not concrete knowledge about CBCS.

**Table 1**

Basic concepts of CBCS	Have concrete knowledge	Have no concrete knowledge
Full form of CBCS	77%	23%
Need of CBCS	26%	74%
Types of courses	32%	68%
Concept of CC	35%	65%
Concept of GE	30%	70%
Concept of DSE	28%	72%
Concept of AECC	31%	69%
Concept of SEC	29%	71%
Concept of credit	24%	76%
Process of credit counting by L T P/ TH TU P	27%	73%
Concept of credit transfer	20%	80%
Knowledge of credit distribution	23%	77%
Concept of GPA & CGPA	28%	72%

From the above-mentioned tables it is found that most of the students have no concrete idea about basic concepts of CBCS.

The following Table No 2 represents the percentage of **teachers** who have/have not concrete knowledge about CBCS

Table 2

Basic concepts of CBCS	Have concrete knowledge	Have no concrete knowledge
Full form of CBCS	96%	04%
Need of CBCS	78%	22%
Types of courses	64%	36%
Concept of CC	75%	25%
Concept of GE	69%	31%
Concept of DSE	66%	34%
Concept of AECC	68%	32%
Concept of SEC	64%	36%
Concept of credit	58%	42%
Process of credit counting by L T P/TH TU P	69%	31%
Concept of credit transfer	41%	59%
Knowledge of credit distribution	48%	52%
Concept of GPA & CGPA	56%	44%

The researcher found that there are some teachers who have not clear idea about CBCS. It also found that there is a lot of implementation problems of CBCS faced by the students and teachers following-

- 1) The students & teachers can not adjust with the new system of CBCS.
- 2) For lack of teachers CBCS is not running properly.
- 3) Proper infrastructure is not available in colleges of West-Bengal.
- 4) Class time management is not done properly.
- 5) Teachers cannot complete syllabus properly within the given time.
- 6) Workload of teachers is surpassed. Not get time for other activities.
- 7) Most of the time of teachers has gone for assessment, copy checking, scrutiny and other activities related to assessment.
- 8) Syllabus has been divided according to the semester but after a semester break when the teacher tries to relate the topic with the previously taught topic on next semester most of the students forget it.

#### 4. Conclusion

The result shows that a large number of students do not have concrete idea about CBCS. Also, it is true that some teachers do not have concrete idea about CBCS. Although, there is a lot of implementation problem of CBCS which can sacrifice the quality of education system. But it also true that sometimes needed to run a system properly. If we try to eliminate the obstacles of this system it can give fruitful intended result with in a less time. A lot of teachers must be recruited for several subjects, papers and courses for giving students' opportunity to choose subject or paper as per their wish. When the number of teachers increased other problems can be solved. Proper infrastructure should be constructed in colleges. For this extra fund is needed which should be properly utilized. Class time should be managed and maintained. Proper utilization of holiday should be done. The teacher should give more emphasis on practical work. So, the aim of this system is good to assessing the overall performance of students through single grading system in a universal way. But it is too early to say whether CBCS system will be properly implemented or not.

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