

Bringing Excellence in Commerce Education through Choice Based Credit System

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Abstract: *India inherited a system of higher education which was not only small but was also characterized by the prevalence of large intra/ interregional imbalances. Determined efforts were made to build a network of Universities, and their affiliated Colleges which provided incredible outreach to a country of vast diversities, in language as also in the prevailing standard of education at the lower levels*

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I. INTRODUCTION

India inherited a system of higher education which was not only small but was also characterized by the prevalence of large intra/ interregional imbalances. Determined efforts were made to build a network of Universities, and their affiliated Colleges which provided incredible outreach to a country of vast diversities, in language as also in the prevailing standard of education at the lower levels. But this did not suffice. Today, the era is of radical changes in education and academic field. The times are changing rapidly than ever before. The upcoming generation is in the state of dilemma. One needs to find a system that matches students' scholastic needs as well as their personal aspirations. India needs multi-dimensional and broad-based quality education to maintain its leadership in the 21st century. Therefore, India should show the concern over the quality in education as the education in India is not competitive in terms of the quantity and quality with other countries. A system with the perfect blend of quality enhancement to stand in competitive market, and, flexibility to meet the students' requirement is the need of the hour. Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) can be a panacea in this case, if implemented systematically. General and particularly in Commerce education.

This approach is undoubtedly, revolutionary. One needs to think 'out of box' to bring change, the one of radical nature. CBCS system provides ample scope to expand one's vision. A plethora of subjects are offered to students. Besides, the benefit of diversified likings can be availed through this system. Interests and liking of students is the base of CBCS system. For example, a science student can study psychology at the same time. This there is a scope for opting for a specialized subject along with the subject of one's choice. Of course, the core subjects and the choice based subjects have different weight age, rightly termed as 'credits'. In short, the system paves way for flexibility in education.

A national aspiration that every graduate should not only have disciplinary knowledge but also be armed with a set of core competencies and switchable skills is the need of the hour. Acquiring skills in numeracy (quantitative/ analytical thinking), language, communication and networking, human relationships, accessing and managing information, and imbibing the spirit of competitiveness and innovation (out-of-the-box view of things) are necessary for successful careers in the 21st century. This portfolio of 'core skills' is a great enabler for employment, entrepreneurship, good citizenry, knowledge and wealth creation and should be viewed as inherently complementary to learning for scholarship, disciplinary expertise and intellectual enrichment.

This system, if implemented effective, can create ample job opportunities, post graduate candidates from various streams can get an opportunity to become teachers and built up their careers.

CBCS, supported by semester system instead of annual examinations is more advantageous to students. Students are benefited more from syllabus point of view. Curtailed syllabus with the same weight age implies that students have less scope to leave the questions as 'optional questions'. The corner questions also have to be taken heed of. Thus, less but

detailed syllabus is the motto of CBCS system. This system may thus, pave way for 'quality education' if implemented effectively.

Now curtailed syllabus does not mean incomplete syllabus. The subjects and the topics therein are judiciously divided among different semesters. Thus, from the students' point of view, chapters are reduced but are covered in more detail.

Introduction of diploma and honors certification along with the degree certificates is yet it's another advantage. A student unable to complete the degree course can at least get a diploma certificate of the University for one year's course. Those who opt for additional one year course are awarded with honors certification. Anybody desirous of further studies after the degree course, but unable to join the Master's course may be benefited. This system will facilitate inter institution transfer of student after completion of a semester. Thus, part completion of an academic program will be done in the institution of enrolment and part completion in the specialized institution. This is a flexible and pragmatic approach each.

Major problem in Implementation of CBCS'S.

There are some barriers associated with the implementation of the said system, which if not corrected in time, may cause serious problems.

The major issue to be contemplating here is the practical applicability of CBCS system. A question that arises in mind is that, is it practically feasible to hire so many teachers for self-financed institutions? In many cases, there is very little choice being offered to students. Is it possible to have a huge infrastructure with modern hi-fi teaching aids, latest teaching gadgets, laboratories and equipment necessary for teaching different subjects. A class of 8 to 10 students needs all facilities that a class of 60 to 80 students need, is it economical feasible?

In practice, there is no inter-disciplinary option. All students in a department have to opt for the same 'elective'. The education institution cannot afford to offer any real choice. At the most they can offer industrial chemistry for chemistry students or industrial statistics for statistics students. The government does not understand the strain on faculty workload.

The educational systems of the foreign universities are not going to bring satisfactory results in the India education set up. It is a known fact that quality and quantity can rarely go together. The system planned out for a definite 'class' is being implemented on the 'mass'. This has rather increased the complexities of the system.

The government had suggested a college cluster system, whereby students could take advantage of the choice provided at a neighboring college. If a government college student wants to take a course at a self-financing college, who will pay? And how much will be paid? This need to be discussed and sorted out.

The effort to accommodate outside student and offer a more flexible timetable in a cluster college system would be more troublesome than its worth.

Continuous evaluation of more than 100 students in a class has increased the drudgery of teachers. This system has made teachers too busy in evaluation task leaving no scope for teachers for their own upliftment and career advancement.

Also teachers do not get enough time to conduct students' presentations, workshops, field study, seminars, arranging for guest lecturers and so on as they are under the constant pressure of completing syllabus and evaluating students' performances. Again, the quality of such programmes conducted is quite debatable.

Suggestions

The above discussion makes it clear that the CBCS has a list of pros and cons. If a mechanism is evolved which would deal with the serious issues discussed above it would help bring a radical change in the present system of commerce education. It is essential that in the knowledge age, commerce education system should be dynamic and adaptive to the changing times.

The internal evaluation should be the sum total of written examination, workshops, field exercises, presentations, overall class participation and so on.

The syllabus and its detailing should be done by commerce Departments of the Universities. Of course, the members of the committee should be highly experienced. All the curricular contents should be specified and sub-divided into units

and if needed into sub-units which are subsequently assigned numerical values and termed as 'credits'. Syllabus should be revised at regular intervals to meet to the needs of the changing times.

The evaluation reports submitted by all the faculty members are to be reviewed from time to time by the departments, School or Centre Committees. This will help ensure transparency, fair-play and accountability.

There is increasing pressure to relate new knowledge and research to the needs of society, market place and issues related to sustainability. Individual initiatives can make a full institutional impact only when they are integrated into a coherent pattern across all levels and programs.

Today the entire world looking India with some hopes and aspirations. Making education meaningful in true sense is a challenging task.

There are several areas which needs special attention. The concept of autonomy needs to be promoted and an apex body on commerce education needs to be set up. Restructuring of courses in the under graduate level & post graduate needs to be devised to implement the policy as also reforming it further keeping in view the recent economic policy of the country.

II. CONCLUSION

Now it is the time to embrace change. We cannot drive into the future by looking into the rear view mirror. The best way is the way forward and it is obvious to have unseen, unexpected twists, turns, some bumps and some ditches too. We need to make our way in spite of these hurdles. To conclude, we can say that CBCS& commerce education is a modern approach. There has been a paradigm shift in the pattern of commerce education during the post independence period in India. Many trends are putting new pressures on the conventionalcommerce education system, forcing many institutions to review and amend their existing policies and procedures.

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