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### Choice based credit system (CBCS) and nursing education

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#### Abstract

The present education system in India, produces young minds with lack of knowledge, lack of confidence, lack of values and skills. The present alarming situation make it necessary to transform or redesigning of present conventional system of education. The concept of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) system was initiated by UGC to enhance and promotes the educational liberalization of existing conventional higher education models.

UGC has introduced a 10-point grading system, which is being adopted by Indian Nursing Council with pass grade modified. CBCS uses a grading and evaluation system to map student performance based on the earned credits. A credit system for higher education measures various parameters like student performance, learning outcomes, entrepreneurship skills, contact hours, innovation & creativity & talent.

As per the Gazette notification of Indian Nursing Council, New Delhi dated 05.07.2021, the B.Sc. Nursing program is a four-year program comprising of eight semesters that is credit and semester based. It is choice based only for elective courses. Competency based curriculum is the main approach that is based on ten core competencies.

**Keywords:** Education system, UGC, CBCS system, nursing education

#### Introduction

The education plays an important role in development of a nation. A large number of educational institutions are providing higher education in India. The present education system in India, produces young minds with lack of knowledge, lack of confidence, lack of values and skills. Conventional education system does not have integration about education, employment and skill development, which doesn't allow young minds to develop good knowledge, confidence, values and skills.

The present alarming situation make it necessary to transform or redesigning of present conventional system of education. It can be done by introducing innovations, developing "learner-centric approach and globally followed evaluation system. It will provide an opportunity for the students to pursue different professional and non-professional courses according to their choice and desired.

The concept of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) system was initiated by UGC to enhance and promotes the educational liberalization of existing conventional higher education models. University Grant Commission (UGC) has made it mandatory to be implemented Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in all the undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) courses under the XI plan of Higher Education. Student centric approach of education system is the main feature of CBCS.

As per the Gazette notification of Indian Nursing Council, New Delhi dated 05.07.2021, the B.Sc. Nursing program is a four-year program comprising of eight semesters that is credit and semester based. It is choice based only for elective courses. Competency based curriculum is the main approach that is based on ten core competencies.

#### Review of Literature

A study was conducted to assess the efficacy of CBCS among teachers. Finding of the study suggests that 42% of the teachers agreed that the objective of CBCS was achieved, 39% of the teachers felt that objectives of CBCS were not met and 18% of the teachers were uncertain. In response to the question whether CBCS emphasizes on only teaching or evaluation, or both, the feedback was mixed – majority (62.5%) of the teachers felt that the emphasis is on evaluation only, while 20% teachers felt that the emphasis was on teaching only and 15% of the teacher felt that both teaching and evaluation were given equal weightage in the CBCS system. (Kelkar, A.S & Ravi Shankar, L. 2014)

A study comparative study was conducted to assess the attitude of science and arts students regarding CBCS. The finding of the study revealed that science background students have positive attitude towards CBCS and art background students have negative attitude towards CBCS system. Findings also revealed that boys are having higher

level of positive attitude towards CBCS compare to Girl's students. (Roy, Khanam & Tribeni, 2013)

### Weaknesses of present conventional education system

Most of the Indian Universities and Colleges have been following marks or percentage-based evaluation system. It acts as a barrier for students' mobility. It doesn't allow them to move from one institution to another to pursue the desired subjects or courses. Present system of higher education in India is having some weaknesses which don't allow the students to have flexibility. These weaknesses are as follows; -

- Lacks context-based approach
- There are no or little opportunities for Group work, Individual work, Data collection, Field work, Quizzes, Class tests & Community involvement
- Lack of inter-disciplinary mobility
- Lack of opportunity for employment due to lack of skills
- Lack of multi-disciplinary, closed isolated environment
- Lack of choices for the student
- No opportunity to the learner to walk out and walk in to earn a certification
- No scope to introduce latest knowledge in the curriculum
- Learning goals of the course and learning objectives of the units/submits never
- Curriculums are not revised at frequent interval
- Lack of facility for Research and innovation in present curriculum

### Applicability of the Grading System in Higher Education System

The CBCS guidelines shall apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate level degree, diploma and certificate programme under the credit system awarded by the Central, State and Deemed to be universities in India.

### Elements of CBCS

1. **Semesters:** Present conventional education system follows annual system of assessment. In the CBCS system, the assessment is done on the basis of semester. A student progresses on the basis of the courses taken rather than time like three years for science, arts, commerce or four years for professional courses such as Basic B.Sc. Nursing etc. As per the Gazette notification of Indian Nursing Council, New Delhi dated 05.07.2021, each semester will have 20 weeks of academic work which is equal to 100 actual working days. There is flexibility in creating the curriculum and

assigning credits based on the course content and hours of teaching. The odd semester is scheduled from July to December and even semester is scheduled from January to June.

2. **Credit system:** CBCS system follows credit system which means each course is assigned a certain credit. Students earn certain credits based on the courses passed and credit assigned to that course. If a student passes one or two courses in a semester, then he does not have to repeat those courses later. The students can earn credits according to his pace and ability. Indian Nursing Council also have assigned certain credits to each course in each semester which is supposed to be earned by the undergraduate nursing students
3. **Credit transfer:** Credits earn in one semester can be transferred in to next semester. Those who are unable to complete courses due to any reason, can pursue remaining courses in the next semester.
4. **Comprehensive continuous assessment:** CBCS system provides an opportunity for the students to have comprehensive continuous assessment by the teacher and students himself.
5. **Grading:** UGC has introduced a 10-point grading system, which is being adopted by Indian Nursing Council with pass grade modified and have been described as follows:

Letter Grade	Score	Percentage of marks
O (Outstanding)	10	100%
A+ (Excellent)	9	90-99.99%
A (Very Good)	8	80-89.99%
B+ (Good)	7	70-79.99%
B (Above Average)	6	60-69.99%
C (Average)	5	50-59.99%
P (Pass)	4	40-49.99%
F (Fail)	0	
Ab (Absent)	0	

For Nursing Courses and all other courses – Pass is at C Grade (5 Grade point) 50% and above for English and elective courses – Pass is at P Grade (4 Grade point) 40% and above

### Computation of Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA)

As per the Gazette notification of Indian Nursing Council, New Delhi dated 05.07.2021, SPGA is the weighted average of the grade points obtained in all courses by the student during the semester (All courses excluding English and electives). Sample illustration of computing SGPA (Semester Grade Point Average) for subjects in semester-I under CBCS system

Course	Credit	Grade letter	Grade point	Credit Point (Credit X Grade)	SGPA (Credit Point/Credit)
<b>Semester-I</b>					
CC-1	6	A+	9	54	
CC-2	6	B	6	36	
DSEC-1	2	A	8	16	
AECC-1	6	C	5	30	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>			<b>136</b>	<b>136/20= 6.8</b>

SGPA= Total credit point/total credit  
= 136/20=6.8  
= 7 rounded off to two decimal points

**Computation of Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)**

As per the Gazette notification of Indian Nursing Council, New Delhi dated 05.07.2021, CGPA is calculated with SGPA of all semesters to two decimal points and is indicated in final grade in mark card/transcript showing grades of all 8 semesters and their courses/subjects. CGPA reflects the failed status in case of fail till the course/s are passed.

Semester-1	Semester-2	Semester-3	Semester-4
Credit-20 SGPA- 6.8	Credit-13 SGPA- 7.5	Credit-11 SGPA- 6.2	Credit-12 SGPA- 5.9

$$CGPA = 20 \times 6.8 + 13 \times 7.5 + 11 \times 6.2 + 12 \times 5.9 / 56$$

$$= 136 + 97.5 + 68.2 + 70.8 / 56$$

$$= 372.5 / 56$$

$$= 6.6$$

**Type of courses**

There are three types of courses which are included in CBCS system of Education. These are as follows; -

1. **Core Course:** There may be a Core Course in every semester. These courses are studied compulsorily by all the students in that specific discipline. It is compulsory requirement to complete the said programme in that discipline. As per the INC Gazette notification, under graduate nursing curriculum should have core courses such as nursing foundation, community health nursing, adult health nursing, child health nursing, mental health nursing and midwifery/OBG Nursing
2. **Elective course:** these courses may be selected by the students based on the availability from a pool of papers. It may be Supportive to the discipline of study. Selection of elective courses may provide an expanded scope for the students, enabling an exposure to some other discipline/ domain and Nurturing student’s proficiency/ skills. As per the INC Gazette notification, total no. of elective courses to be completed by an undergraduate Nursing student are three from the INC listed courses. An elective course may be of two types:
  - a) **Discipline Specific Elective (DSE) Course:** -Elective courses offered from the main discipline/subject of study is referred 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).
  - b) **Dissertation/Project:** - A course designed to acquire special/advanced knowledge, such as supplement study/support study to a project work. A candidate studies such a course on his own with support from a teacher is called dissertation/project.
  - c) **Generic Elective (GE) Course:** - A course chosen generally from an unrelated discipline/subject, with an intention to seek exposure in that area is called a Generic Elective.

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:

- a) **Ability Enhancement Compulsory Courses (AECC):** These courses are based upon the content that leads to Knowledge enhancement of the students. These are mandatory for all the students in disciplines. For example, Environmental Science, English Communication.
- b) **Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC):** These are value-based and/or skill-based courses. They are aimed at providing hands-on-training, competencies, skills, etc. These courses may be chosen from a pool of courses.

**Credit system in CBCS system of Education**

Generally, it is conventional to assign credit to each course. Credits can be assigned based on the hour’s course per week. Each credit per semester is equal to one hour of teaching, which includes both lecture (L) or tutorial (T) or 2 hours of practical work/field work (P) per week. A study course can have only Lecture component (L) or only tutorial (T) or practical (P) component or combination of any two or all the three components. The total credits earned by a student for each semester is L+T+P. For example;

- Six-hour course per week -4 Credits
- Four / five-hour course per week -3 Credits
- Two-hour course per week -2 Credits
- Two-hour Lab work per week -1 Credit

As per the Gazette notification of *Indian Nursing Council*, New Delhi dated 05.07.2021,

- 1 Hour per week/ Semester (Theory) -1 Credit
- 2 Hours per week/ Semester (Practical/lab/skill lab/simulation lab) -1 Credit
- 4 Hours per week/Semester (Clinical) -1 Credit
- 1 Hour per week /Semester (Elective course) -1 Credit

Minimum required credit for completing Under Graduate program is -

- Six semester course -120 Credits
- Eight semesters course -150 Credits.

Generally, it is conventional to assigned

- Compulsory Courses -4 Credits per course
- Core/Special Courses -3 Credits per course
- Applied Components -3 Credits per course
- Foundation Courses -2 Credits per course
- Skill Courses -2 Credits per course

**Merits of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)**

- It offers students to choose courses of their own choice and it is referred as ‘Cafeteria’ approach.
- It is more of learner centric approach rather than teacher centered approach
- The credit system allows a student to study what he prefers in his own sequence as per his interests.
- It provides an opportunity to the learner to learn at their own pace.
- Stress and anxiety of learners can be reduced through this system.
- Work efficiency can be enhanced.
- Development of professional skills can be possible.
- Learners acquire job-oriented skills.

- Students can opt for additional courses and can achieve more than the required credits.
- It promotes group work, research, and community involvement.
- Highly motivated students get the chance to gain extra credits.
- It provides an opportunity to opt for an interdisciplinary approach to learning.
- It helps the learners to pursue their courses at different times.
- Equality among the learners can be ensured through it, as it has the grading system.
- Build favorable learning environment, as everyone is supposed to take part in learning process as per their ability and competency.
- It provides an opportunity to develop cooperation and healthy work temperament among the learners.
- It provides an opportunity for students to have the facility of inter college/university migration within the country and outside becomes easy with the transfer of Credits.
- Students can have the facility to complete one part of the course in one institute and the other part in another institute which will allow him to have better choice between good and bad colleges/ institutes. It will help to achieve Global system of Education.
- More emphasis on activity-based teaching such as seminar presentation, assignment, discussion, project etc.
- It helps learners to realize their potentials through the flexibility in offering courses.
- It provides more opportunity to enhance their skills and more scope of taking up projects and assignments, vocational training, including entrepreneurship.
- It improves the job opportunities for students.
- It enables employers to assess the performance of students on a scientific scale.

#### **Demerits of Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS)**

- Difficult to calculate the exact marks of the students.
- Increased work load of nursing teachers.
- Disturbance in regular teaching.
- Demand good infrastructure for dissemination of education
- Mobilization of students from one institution/University to another institution/university will be challenging for all the stakeholders.
- Compatibility among main subject's papers and soft papers would be challenging one.
- Freedom to choose courses with different background will be difficult for the authorities involved in implication of CBCS system.
- Work load of institutions/department/universities will increase due to flexibility in education system.
- Additional infrastructure in institution will be required for implication of CBCS system.

#### **Suggestions for Better Implementation of CBCS in Nursing Education system**

Few points can be kept in mind for better implications of CBCS in Nursing Education system in India. These are as

follows; -

- Adequate training to all the stakeholders such as university officials, institutional officials and others should be given to handle it properly.
- Class room teaching should be given importance.
- CBCS system should be made mandatory to all the UG and PG programs in all the Universities.
- Workshops, Seminars, Conferences, discussions and debate should be organized to discuss its merits and demerits in detail.
- Adequate guidance and counselling services should be provided for the teachers and students for choosing soft core papers.
- Central, state and deemed to be universities should have similar kind of education and infrastructure to have better implication of CBCS system
- All the universities should have equal standard of education so that mobility of students can be checked.
- Concern Department/Institute should be allowed to govern selection of papers and choosing credits.

#### **Conclusion**

The CBCS System follows semester system of assessment. CBCS includes even & odd semester that sums up to an academic year. CBCS uses a grading and evaluation system to map student performance based on the earned credits. A credit system for higher education measures various parameters like student performance, learning outcomes, entrepreneurship skills, contact hours, innovation & creativity & talent.

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