

Academic Flexibility of National Educational Policy: Academic Bank of Credits

Subhash Chandra Parija¹, Padmavathi Shanmuganathan²

Annals of SBV (2022): 10.5005/jp-journals-10085-9122

Our ancient education system started in the form of Gurukul where different scriptures were taught and learnt, and it has evolved enormously over the years to reach the present hi-tech system of education. The major breakthrough in the current education system is the introduction of the national educational policy (NEP) 2020 with a vision to make our country a superpower globally in the aspect of knowledge by providing equal and high quality of education to each and every student.¹ The prime challenges faced in the current system of higher education are lower student enrollment and higher dropout rates. The major reasons for high dropouts are chiefly attributed to financial constraints, family problems, loss of interest in the chosen area over time, irrelevant and suboptimal course content, poor placements, and unexpected health conditions, etc.²

In order to overcome such problems that hamper the education system in India, the NEP has brought out the academic flexibility concept through the academic bank of credits (ABC) system. The main objective of this student-friendly approach is to provide a student-centric education with ample scope for the students to choose their best course/academic program and complete the same at their own pace and will.

This credit system would confer on students earned credits that could be accumulated from various higher education institutions (HEI) across the country under the umbrella of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The accumulated credits would be deemed valid for a specific period. The validity is for a period of 7 years, following which the credentials would expire. All the credentials gained by the student will be deleted from the student's account once they complete their course and receive their degree or certificate.

Academic Bank of Credits is responsible for maintaining and verifying the credentials of each registered student. The credentials can be deposited only by the HEI, which offers the particular course/program. Each student will be provided with a unique ID for accessing his/her credential data. This feature is applicable to all undergraduate as well as postgraduate courses/academic programs offered by any UGC-recognized HEIs, either provided through regular classroom teaching or online or distance learning methods. Under this system, PhD, diploma, and certificate courses are also included. Courses run by Study Webs of Active-learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM), and National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) are also considered viable under this system.

This ABC will provide students freedom in terms of academic flexibility by allowing them to choose the course of choice or the same course in an institute of their preference without wasting

¹Vice Chancellor, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, Puducherry, India

²Department of Pharmacology, Mahatma Gandhi Medical College and Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, Puducherry, India

Corresponding Author: Padmavathi Shanmuganathan, Department of Pharmacology, Mahatma Gandhi Medical College and Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, Puducherry, India, Phone: +91 9842030490, e-mail: padmavathis@mgmcri.ac.in

How to cite this article: Parija SC, Shanmuganathan P. Academic Flexibility of National Educational Policy: Academic Bank of Credits. *Ann SBV* 2022;11(2):31–32.

Source of support: Nil

Conflict of interest: Dr Subhash Chandra Parija and Dr Padmavathi Shanmuganathan are associated as the Editorial board member of this journal and this manuscript was subjected to this journal's standard review procedures, with this peer review handled independently of the Editor-in-Chief and his/her research group.

their existing credentials. This would pave a way for students who may be having personal commitments and give them a chance to explore a different field or even allow them to continue the course of choice at a different HEI.^{1,3}

This student-centric approach would help to reduce the dropout rate and help students who are perturbed by economic instability, in particular, to learn at their own pace and complete the course successfully. This will also help them to muster their confidence and encourage further learning. This multipronged approach would help the learners to contribute to an enhanced enrolment ratio in higher studies and thus students could make a better career choice and increase their employability skills and, in the process, enhance the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). This also helps the HEIs to collaborate with each other and thus depict a higher quality of education.³

The comprehensive NEP will help to eliminate the existing inequalities and other pedagogical issues that we face in the current education system. In spite of its enormous benefits to the students through academic flexibility, making the stakeholders understand the concept of such an extensive academic flexibility system and accumulation of credentials is regarded as a huge task. Another major challenge is in terms of the implementation of this grading system in a uniform manner across the institutes in the country. Overcoming this bottleneck needs extreme cooperation and commitment from all levels of educational entities.

In conclusion, effective implementation of ABC is the need of the hour to overcome all the prevailing challenges and bring out

holistic development in the learners, irrespective of their economic and social status, and thus, help our nation to achieve competence and completion, so as to reach the prestigious status of a global superpower.

REFERENCES

1. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. National Education Policy 2020. Available at: https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf. Accessed on: 5 December 2022.
2. University Grants Commission. Higher education in India: Issues related to expansion, inclusiveness, quality and finance. Available at: <https://www.ugc.ac.in/oldpdf/pub/report/12.pdf>. Accessed on: 5 December 2022.
3. Shashidharan M, Bansal R, Hothi BS, Athavale VA, Mahajan Y, Anwar S. A review on National Education Policy 2020 and its influence on academics. *J Leg Ethical Regul Issues* 2021;24(S1):1–6.