

Academic Bank of Credit under NEP 2020

Ms. Roma H. Langal, Ms. Maushmi Ghosh, Mr. Keshav Chaudhary, Mr. Bishnoi Alok Babulal

Nirmala College of Commerce, Malad-East

Reckon Women's Degree College of Commerce, Nallasopara East

Researcher, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh

Student, Nirmala College of Commerce, Malad-East

Abstract: *The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) represents a groundbreaking initiative, meticulously designed to revolutionize the higher education landscape by fostering unprecedented flexibility, enhancing student mobility, and promoting the concept of lifelong learning. This innovative framework, deeply rooted in the core principles of India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, empowers students to accumulate, seamlessly transfer, and strategically redeem academic credits earned across a diverse network of recognized institutions. By facilitating this fluid exchange of academic achievements, ABC paves the way for a truly multidisciplinary learning experience and the construction of modular degree pathways tailored to individual student needs.*

This transformative framework is particularly instrumental in addressing critical challenges such as persistently high dropout rates, the imperative for skill diversification, and the urgent need to enhance graduate employability. By providing students with the flexibility to pause and resume their educational journeys without the fear of losing previously earned credits, ABC fosters a more inclusive and adaptable learning environment. Moreover, ABC actively promotes the integration of digital learning, recognizing and supporting credits earned through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and reputable platforms such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, and Coursera. This integration not only expands access to high-quality education but also aligns with the evolving demands of the digital age.

This research paper embarks on a comprehensive analysis of the quantitative impact of ABC on various critical aspects of higher education, including student performance, institutional adaptability, and evolving employment trends. Employing a robust methodological approach that encompasses rigorous statistical analysis, in-depth case studies, and meticulous comparative evaluations, the study aims to elucidate how ABC is reshaping the traditional structures of higher education. Furthermore, it delves into the intricate challenges associated with the implementation of this innovative framework, including the complexities of credit standardization, the development of effective regulatory policies, and the establishment of a robust technological infrastructure.

The findings from this research are expected to provide invaluable policy recommendations for optimizing the adoption and implementation of ABC, ensuring its effectiveness in creating a more inclusive, student-centric, and globally competitive education system. By addressing the challenges and maximizing the opportunities presented by ABC, this study seeks to contribute to the realization of NEP 2020's vision for a dynamic and responsive higher education landscape.

Keywords: *Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, Lifelong Learning, Student Mobility, Multidisciplinary Education, Flexible Learning Pathways, Digital Learning Integration, MOOCs, Higher Education Reform, Skill-Based Learning, Modular Degree System, Employability and Skill Development, Credit Standardization Challenges, Regulatory Framework and Governance.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) represents a watershed moment in the evolution of India's higher education system, a transformative initiative meticulously crafted under the auspices of the National Education Policy (NEP)



2020. Its core mission is to modernize and democratize higher education by introducing unprecedented levels of flexibility, student mobility, and personalized learning opportunities. Envisioned as a sophisticated digital repository, ABC serves as a central hub for the storage and management of students' academic credits, empowering them to seamlessly transfer, accumulate, and redeem these credits across a network of recognized institutions. This innovative system paves the way for the construction of modular degree pathways, enabling students to pursue interdisciplinary education, embrace lifelong learning, and engage in skill-based development tailored to their individual aspirations.

As articulated in the seminal document of NEP 2020, "An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) shall be established to digitally record the academic credits obtained from various recognized Higher Education Institutions so that the degrees from a Higher Education Institution may be granted taking into account credits gained." (NEP, 2020, pt. no. 11.9, p. 37). This statement encapsulates the fundamental objective of ABC: to dismantle the rigid, often inflexible structures that have traditionally characterized higher education, and to cultivate a learner-centric ecosystem that empowers students to navigate their educational journeys with unparalleled freedom. By introducing the concept of credit portability, ABC champions greater inclusivity and accessibility, particularly for students who may encounter the necessity to pause and resume their studies due to a myriad of circumstances, be they financial, personal, or professional. It acknowledges the diverse realities of student lives and aims to provide an educational framework that accommodates these realities.

In essence, ABC represents a departure from the one-size-fits-all model of education, instead fostering a dynamic and adaptable system that empowers students to curate their own unique educational experiences. It recognizes that learning is not confined to the traditional four-year degree, but rather a lifelong pursuit, and provides the tools to make this pursuit more attainable for all.

1. What is the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)?

Imagine a world where your educational journey isn't confined to the walls of a single university, where you can seamlessly blend diverse disciplines, and where life's unexpected turns don't derail your academic aspirations. This vision is precisely what the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) aims to realize. This digital credit repository system, a cornerstone of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is designed to revolutionize how students accumulate, manage, and utilize their earned academic credits throughout their higher education journey. It's about empowering students to craft their own unique educational paths, breaking free from the traditional constraints of rigid university programs.

At its core, ABC is a digital vault where students' academic achievements are securely stored and managed. It's not just about storage; it's about enabling a truly flexible and modular learning approach. Students can accumulate credits from a multitude of recognized institutions, essentially building their own personalized curriculum. Unlike the old system, where you had to complete all your courses at one university, ABC allows you to cherry-pick the best courses from various UGC-approved institutions.

Need to relocate? Want to explore a new field? Found a specialized course that perfectly aligns with your interests? ABC makes it possible.

One of the most transformative aspects of ABC is its seamless credit storage and transfer functionality. Think of it as a passport for your academic achievements. You can move between institutions, accumulate credits along the way, and piece them together to fulfill your degree requirements. This level of flexibility is a game-changer, especially for those who need to balance education with life's unpredictable demands.

Then there's the Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES), a lifeline for students facing unexpected interruptions. Life happens. Financial constraints, personal commitments, or professional opportunities might require you to pause your studies. With MEES, you can do so without losing your hard-earned credits. You can simply pick up where you left off, ensuring that your educational journey remains uninterrupted. This is about acknowledging that learning is a lifelong endeavor, not a race against time.

ABC also champions interdisciplinary learning, recognizing that the most innovative solutions often emerge at the intersection of different fields. Imagine a commerce student delving into the intricacies of artificial intelligence, or an engineering student exploring the nuances of psychology. ABC makes these combinations possible, broadening



students' skill sets and making them more adaptable to the evolving job market. It's about fostering holistic knowledge and breaking down the silos that have traditionally separated academic disciplines.

In today's digital age, online learning is no longer a novelty; it's a necessity. ABC embraces this reality by fully integrating with platforms like SWAYAM, NPTEL, Coursera, and other MOOCs. This means you can earn credits from high-quality online courses and have them recognized by your institution. Whether you're a remote learner, a working professional, or simply someone seeking to upskill, ABC democratizes access to quality education.

And to further ensure that your educational journey is both flexible and relevant, ABC introduces a 7-year credit validity policy. This gives you ample time to complete your degree, balancing your studies with other life commitments, while still ensuring that your knowledge remains current.

In essence, ABC is a paradigm shift, moving away from rigid degree structures and towards a student-centric, modular learning approach. It's about empowering you to take control of your education, explore your passions, and gain the skills you need to thrive in a dynamic world.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) plays a crucial role in overseeing ABC, ensuring its smooth operation under the National Academic Depository (NAD). This partnership guarantees that your academic records are secure, authentic, and easily accessible. By integrating traditional, online, and skill-based learning, ABC aligns Indian higher education with global best practices, making it more competency-driven and career-oriented. It's a revolutionary step towards a more flexible, accessible, and relevant education system.

Key Features of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC):

Credit Storage and Transfer: Building Your Educational Mosaic

Imagine your academic journey as a grand mosaic, where each course you complete is a vibrant tile, contributing to the overall masterpiece of your education. This is the essence of ABC's credit storage and transfer system. It's not just about keeping records; it's about empowering you to build your educational mosaic from the best pieces available across the academic landscape.

One of the most significant shifts ABC introduces is the ability to seamlessly accumulate, track, and move credits between UGC-approved institutions. Think of it as a digital passport for your academic achievements. In the past, if you decided to transfer universities, you often faced the daunting prospect of starting over. Previous credits, those hard-earned tiles of your mosaic, were frequently deemed unrecognizable, forcing you to rebuild from scratch. ABC dismantles this frustrating barrier, ensuring that all participating institutions recognize and validate the credits stored in your secure digital repository.

This means that you can earn credits at one institution and confidently transfer them to another, enabling you to complete your degree across multiple universities without losing any academic ground. It's about flexibility, mobility, and the freedom to curate your own unique educational experience.

This feature is particularly transformative for students who find themselves needing to relocate, whether due to family circumstances, professional opportunities, or personal preferences. It's also a boon for those who wish to explore different disciplines, perhaps discovering a newfound passion or seeking to broaden their skill set. And for those who simply seek better academic opportunities elsewhere, ABC opens up a world of possibilities.

To ensure secure access and retrieval of your academic records, ABC provides you with a unique ABC ID. This acts as your personal key to your educational mosaic, allowing you to access and manage your credits whenever required.

Beyond individual benefits, this credit portability fosters a culture of inter-institutional collaboration. It encourages universities to work together, promoting student mobility and interdisciplinary learning. Previously, these were often limited by institutional constraints and rigid boundaries. Now, students can weave together courses from diverse institutions, creating a truly rich and multifaceted educational experience. It's about breaking down barriers and empowering students to build their own unique paths to success.

The Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES): Redefining the Student Journey

Imagine a world where your education adapts to the rhythms of your life, not the other way around. This is the promise of the Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES), a truly transformative feature within the Academic Bank of Credit



(ABC). It's designed to dismantle the rigid structures of traditional higher education and replace them with a system that understands and accommodates the complexities of modern life.

For too long, students have been confined to a linear, inflexible path. The traditional model demanded that you complete your entire degree within a set timeframe, at a single institution. If life threw you a curveball—personal challenges, financial hardships, health issues—you often had no choice but to abandon your studies. Even if you had completed significant coursework, those efforts were often lost, leaving you with nothing to show for your hard work if you couldn't complete the full degree in one continuous stretch.

MEES throws this outdated model out the window. It's a breath of fresh air, introducing a modular learning approach that puts you in control. You can pause your studies when needed, resume them when you're ready, or even shift between courses and institutions, all while retaining the academic credits you've earned. It's about building your education in phases, fitting it around your life, not the other way around. No longer will the fear of losing progress hold you back. With MEES, your educational journey is truly yours to navigate.:

How MEES Works Under ABC: Your Educational Milestones

Think of MEES as a series of educational milestones, each one marking your progress and providing you with tangible recognition for your hard work. It's designed to acknowledge that learning isn't always a straight line, and that life's detours shouldn't derail your educational journey.

Here's how it breaks down:

● **One Year Completed? A Certificate in Hand:**

○ Imagine you've completed a year of focused study. That's a significant achievement, and MEES recognizes it. You'll receive a Certificate in your chosen subject, a formal acknowledgment of your dedication and acquired knowledge. It's a stepping stone, a testament to your commitment.

● **Two Years Completed? A Diploma to Show For It:**

○ Continue your journey for another year, and you'll reach another milestone: a Diploma. This represents a deeper dive into your field of study, a testament to your growing expertise. It's a valuable credential that can open doors to new opportunities.

● **Three or Four Years Completed? Your Full Degree Awaits:**

○ Whether your degree program is three or four years, completing it marks the culmination of your hard work. You'll be awarded your full degree, a symbol of your comprehensive knowledge and dedication.

● **Life Interrupted? Your Credits Are Safe:**

○ Life can throw unexpected curveballs. If you need to pause your studies, your earned credits won't vanish. They'll remain valid for up to seven years, securely stored in your ABC account. When you're ready to return, you can pick up right where you left off, without having to repeat courses you've already completed. It's like pressing pause on your favorite show, knowing you can resume it whenever you want.

This system is about more than just flexibility; it's about empowerment. It allows you to balance your education with your personal and professional commitments, enabling you to learn at your own pace and on your own terms. It's about recognizing that every student's journey is unique, and that education should be adaptable to those individual needs.

Who Benefits from MEES?

The Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES) isn't just a policy; it's a lifeline for countless students, designed to make education more accessible and adaptable to the realities of their lives. It's about recognizing that everyone's journey is unique, and that education should be a companion, not a constraint.

Here's a glimpse into the lives MEES aims to transform:

● **For the Working Professional:**

○ Imagine juggling a demanding job while dreaming of furthering your education. Many professionals find the traditional full-time degree an impossible commitment. MEES changes that. It allows them to pursue their educational



aspirations in manageable stages, fitting learning around their work schedules. It's about empowering them to gain new skills and qualifications without sacrificing their careers.

● For the Student Facing Financial Hardship:

○ Higher education can be a significant financial burden. MEES provides a safety net for students who can't afford to complete their degree in one continuous stretch. It allows them to pause their studies, work to earn money, and then confidently return to their education, knowing their progress is secure. It's about leveling the playing field and ensuring that financial constraints don't become insurmountable barriers.

● For the Explorer of Knowledge:

○ Many students enter college with a sense of curiosity, eager to explore different fields before settling on a specialization. MEES supports this exploration. It allows them to try different subjects, to discover their passions, without the fear of academic loss. If they choose to change their direction, they can transfer their credits and move forward, minimizing wasted time and effort. It's about nurturing their intellectual curiosity and allowing them to find their true calling.

● For the Student from Rural or Underprivileged Backgrounds:

○ Students from rural or underprivileged backgrounds often face unique challenges, including social and economic barriers that can disrupt their education. MEES provides them with a pathway to return to their studies when their circumstances allow. It's about ensuring that they are not permanently disadvantaged by factors beyond their control, and that they have the opportunity to build a brighter future.

● For Women Balancing Life and Learning:

○ Women often shoulder significant personal responsibilities, including family commitments and maternity leave. MEES recognizes these realities and provides them with the flexibility to pause and resume their education as needed. It's about creating a more inclusive and equitable educational environment, where women can pursue their academic goals without sacrificing their personal lives.

MEES is about more than just flexibility; it's about creating a system that truly supports the diverse needs of all students. It's about empowering them to pursue their dreams, regardless of the obstacles they may face.

MEES: A Pathway to Success and the Roadblocks Ahead

The Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES) isn't just a theoretical concept; it's a practical solution designed to tackle some of the most pressing challenges in higher education. Its ability to boost retention and completion rates is a testament to its student-centric design.

The Power of MEES in Keeping Students on Track

Imagine the countless students who, in the past, were forced to abandon their dreams of higher education. Financial struggles, unforeseen health issues, or personal crises would derail their studies, and under the old system, they would lose everything they had worked for. MEES changes this narrative.

● A Safety Net for Academic Progress:

○ With MEES, students retain their hard-earned credits, providing a crucial safety net. This makes it significantly easier to resume studies after a break, knowing that their previous efforts haven't gone to waste. It's like having a bookmark in your educational journey, allowing you to pick up right where you left off.

● Reducing the Pressure Cooker:

○ The traditional rigid timelines of higher education can create immense pressure. MEES alleviates this stress by removing the pressure to complete a degree within a strict timeframe. Students can learn at their own pace, balancing their studies with other life commitments. It's about fostering a healthier and more sustainable learning environment.

● Recognizing Every Step of the Journey:

○ Even if a student chooses to exit a program early, MEES ensures they receive formal certifications. This recognition of partial qualifications provides them with valuable credentials, enabling them to secure employment or continue learning through professional development courses. It's about acknowledging that every step of the educational journey has value.



● **Embracing Lifelong Learning:**

○ MEES promotes the concept of lifelong learning, allowing individuals to return to education at any stage of their lives. It's about creating a culture where learning is seen as a continuous process, not a one-time event.

Navigating the Challenges of Implementation

● **The Quest for Credit Standardization:**

○ Ensuring that credits earned at one institution are seamlessly transferable to another requires a unified approach. Universities must work together to standardize course curricula, credit evaluation, and grading systems. It's about building a bridge between institutions, ensuring that students can move freely without bureaucratic hurdles.

● **Building Institutional Readiness:**

○ Many institutions need to upgrade their digital infrastructure to integrate with the ABC system and effectively manage student credits. Faculty and administrative staff must be trained to handle modular degree pathways. It's about equipping institutions with the tools and knowledge they need to support this transformative system.

● **Bridging the Awareness Gap:**

○ While MEES offers valuable credentials, awareness among students and employers is crucial. Awareness campaigns and industry collaborations are needed to ensure that all levels of exit qualifications are widely recognized and valued. It's about communicating the benefits of MEES to all stakeholders.

● **Redesigning Financial Aid:**

○ Financial aid systems need to be redesigned to support students who pursue education in phases. Governments and institutions must create scholarship models that accommodate flexible learning paths. It's about ensuring that financial support is aligned with the realities of modern education.

Despite these challenges, the successful implementation of MEES holds the potential to revolutionize higher education in India, making it more inclusive, flexible, and aligned with global trends. It's about building a future where education empowers everyone to reach their full potential.

Let's infuse this section with a more vibrant and engaging tone, highlighting the transformative potential of interdisciplinary learning and the integration of digital platforms within the ABC framework:

Interdisciplinary Learning: Weaving Together the Tapestry of Knowledge

Imagine stepping beyond the confines of traditional academic silos, where the boundaries between disciplines blur, and students are free to explore the rich tapestry of knowledge. This is the promise of interdisciplinary learning under the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC). It's about breaking down the rigid structures that have long confined students to single streams—Science, Commerce, or Arts—and opening up a world of possibilities.

With ABC, students are empowered to:

Forge Unique Academic Pathways: Envision a student combining Finance with Artificial Intelligence, Psychology with Marketing, or Economics with Environmental Science. These are not just hypothetical scenarios; they are the realities that ABC makes possible. Students can now curate their own personalized learning journeys, weaving together diverse disciplines to create a truly unique educational experience.

Craft Hybrid Skill Sets: In today's rapidly evolving world, employers are seeking individuals with a blend of technical, managerial, and creative skills. ABC enables students to develop these hybrid skill sets, preparing them to thrive in a dynamic and interconnected world. It's about creating well-rounded individuals who can tackle complex challenges from multiple perspectives.

Align Learning with Career Aspirations: No longer are students confined to a fixed curriculum. They can now choose electives that directly align with their career aspirations, gaining the specific knowledge and skills they need to succeed. It's about empowering them to take control of their future and build a career they are passionate about.

For instance, a B.Com student with a keen interest in business analytics can now seamlessly integrate AI and Data Science courses into their curriculum. This not only enhances their understanding of the digital economy but also makes



them highly sought-after by employers. It's about equipping students with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of the modern job market.

Integration with Digital Platforms: Expanding the Horizons of Education

The Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) acts as a vital bridge between traditional education and the burgeoning world of digital learning. It recognizes that learning is no longer confined to the walls of a classroom and that online platforms offer a wealth of knowledge and opportunities.

By integrating Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) from platforms like SWAYAM, NPTEL, Coursera, and edX, ABC allows students to earn credits from digital courses and seamlessly transfer them into their degree programs. This encourages students to pursue online certifications alongside their university coursework, providing them with industry-relevant skills and global exposure.

Imagine an engineering student at IIT Delhi enrolling in a blockchain technology course offered by Stanford University through Coursera. With ABC, they can earn credits for this course and have them recognized by their institution. This level of flexibility ensures that students are not limited by the courses offered at their own university but can access cutting-edge knowledge from top institutions worldwide.

Furthermore, ABC significantly enhances educational accessibility for students in remote and underserved areas. These students, who may lack access to specialized courses or faculty expertise in emerging fields, can now benefit from the vast resources available online.

By recognizing online learning and skill-based education, ABC fosters diversity in academic pathways, ensuring that students can learn anytime, anywhere. It's about making education more inclusive, adaptable, and responsive to the ever-changing demands of the industry.

7-Year Credit Validity: Your Academic Safety Net for Life's Unexpected Turns

Life rarely follows a perfectly linear path, and your educational journey shouldn't have to either. This is where the 7-year credit validity policy within the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) shines. It's more than just a policy; it's a safety net, a promise that your

hard-earned academic progress remains secure and usable, even when life throws you a curveball.

Imagine you're pursuing your degree, balancing studies with work, family responsibilities, or unexpected financial hurdles. Suddenly, you need to pause your education. In the past, this could have meant starting all over again. But with ABC's 7-year validity, your credits are safe, waiting for you whenever you're ready to return.

This policy is a game-changer for students who need to juggle multiple responsibilities. It acknowledges that education isn't always a sprint; sometimes, it's a marathon with necessary pit stops. It's about providing the peace of mind that your academic efforts won't be wasted, even if you need to take a break.

Think of it as a flexible timeline for your educational goals. You have seven years to complete your degree, giving you the freedom to learn at your own pace and on your own terms. This is especially crucial for financially disadvantaged students who may need to work to support themselves before resuming their studies. They no longer have to choose between earning a living and pursuing their education.

Moreover, the 7-year validity encourages lifelong learning. It empowers individuals to upskill and reskill throughout their careers, knowing they can build upon their existing academic foundation without fear of losing their progress. It's about recognizing that learning is a continuous journey, not a one-time event.

In essence, the 7-year credit validity policy is about making education more inclusive and adaptable to the diverse realities of students' lives. It's about providing the flexibility and support needed to thrive, regardless of life's unexpected turns.

2. How Does ABC Work?

The Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) stands as a centralized digital system, meticulously designed to record, track, and facilitate the transfer of academic credits, thereby granting students an unprecedented level of flexibility throughout their educational journey. This process commences with student enrollment, where learners register for a unique ABC



ID on the official portal. This ID serves as a comprehensive digital academic record, intricately linking all earned credits to the student's personal profile.

Once enrolled, students begin the process of accumulating credits by successfully completing courses, with their respective institutions seamlessly depositing these credits into their individual ABC accounts. The credits awarded are determined by rigorous criteria, including course syllabi, standardized assessment standards, and institutional accreditation, ensuring both uniformity and quality in credit recognition. A pivotal functionality of ABC is its ability to facilitate credit transfer and utilization, enabling students to redeem their earned credits at another university should they decide to transfer. This ensures that their academic progress remains uninterrupted, minimizing any potential disruptions to their educational trajectory. Furthermore, students can leverage their ABC credits to pursue certificates, diplomas, or full degrees under the Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES), offering enhanced flexibility in structuring their academic path. Another significant aspect of ABC is its seamless integration with online learning platforms such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, and Coursera. This integration empowers students to earn credits from Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and incorporate them into their degree programs, expanding their learning opportunities and allowing them to acquire specialized skills from global institutions while continuing their primary degree. Ultimately, when a student has accumulated the required number of credits for a degree, they can redeem them at a degree-granting institution, allowing them to complete their education at their own pace. This system effectively dismantles rigid academic timelines, ensuring that students can progress through their education based on their individual personal and professional needs. By seamlessly integrating credit storage, transferability, and online learning, ABC transforms higher education into a more inclusive, student-centric, and globally competitive system, catering to a diverse range of learners and fostering lifelong learning opportunities.

3. Why Was ABC Introduced in NEP 2020?

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 lays out a vision for an educational landscape that is holistic, flexible, and fundamentally multidisciplinary, and the introduction of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) stands as a pivotal initiative in realizing this vision. A core motivation behind implementing ABC is to significantly enhance student mobility, enabling learners to seamlessly transition between diverse institutions, explore various disciplines, and engage with different learning formats without the fear of losing their accumulated academic progress. This system is particularly advantageous for students who may encounter the need to relocate, desire to switch courses, or seek to explore multiple fields of study, providing them with the freedom to navigate their educational journeys with greater ease. Moreover, ABC plays a critical role in mitigating dropout rates by offering students the option to temporarily pause their education and subsequently resume it, guaranteeing that their previously earned credits remain valid and recognized. ABC also actively encourages interdisciplinary learning by empowering students to combine subjects from different domains, facilitating the creation of customized and personalized degree programs that align with their specific interests and career aspirations. The seamless integration of digital learning platforms and vocational training programs within the ABC framework promotes lifelong learning, providing students with the opportunity to earn credits from Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, and Coursera, and have these credits contribute towards their degrees. Furthermore, by harmonizing India's credit transfer policies with international education standards, ABC ensures global competitiveness, equipping Indian students with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the global job market. By transitioning towards a modular and competency-based education framework, ABC effectively transforms the traditional rigid degree structure into a learner-centric system, empowering students to take ownership of their academic and professional development. This model fosters greater flexibility, accessibility, and inclusivity, making higher education in India more adaptable to the dynamic and evolving needs of both students and industries.

4. Impact of ABC on Students:

ABC empowers students with an unparalleled degree of flexibility and autonomy in their educational pursuits. This empowerment manifests in several significant ways. Students gain the freedom to design personalized learning paths, carefully selecting courses that align with their specific career aspirations and seamlessly transitioning between



institutions without the fear of academic loss. Furthermore, ABC effectively reduces academic pressure by allowing students to study at their own pace, completing their degrees in a manner that suits their individual needs and circumstances. The system also extends its recognition to online learning and skill-based education, validating credits earned through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), vocational training, and skill-development courses, thereby enhancing students' job readiness. Moreover, ABC improves accessibility and inclusion by enabling rural and working students to pursue higher education without being bound by strict time constraints. However, it is important to acknowledge that students may encounter challenges related to credit recognition, course equivalency, and the institutional acceptance of credits, highlighting areas where further refinement and standardization are necessary.

5. Impact of ABC on Universities and Teachers:

The introduction of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) presents a significant paradigm shift for higher education institutions (HEIs), necessitating a comprehensive overhaul of their operational and academic frameworks. To ensure the seamless transfer and recognition of academic credits, universities are compelled to align their curricula, assessment methodologies, and technological infrastructure. This alignment mandates the adoption of a standardized academic credit framework, ensuring that courses across diverse institutions adhere to a common structure, thereby facilitating smooth credit transfers without academic detriment to students. A critical challenge confronting universities is the imperative for digital integration to effectively implement ABC.

Institutions must undertake substantial upgrades to their learning management systems (LMS), student databases, and administrative frameworks to ensure compatibility with the ABC portal. This transition demands significant investment in robust IT infrastructure, encompassing secure cloud storage, blockchain-based credential verification, and comprehensive online student support systems. Universities that fail to adapt to these technological advancements risk compromising the flexibility promised by ABC. Moreover, ABC fosters a culture of inter-university collaboration, encouraging institutions to forge credit transfer agreements. This collaborative approach expands students' access to a diverse range of courses and disciplines across institutions, thereby enhancing the quality and breadth of educational offerings. However, it also intensifies competition among universities for student enrollments. Given that students now possess the freedom to curate their course selections from multiple institutions, universities must prioritize innovation and enhance the quality of their programs to attract and retain students. Institutions that offer high-demand courses, industry-relevant certifications, and robust digital learning environments will gain a competitive advantage under the ABC framework. Furthermore, universities are required to revise their degree accreditation policies to accommodate multiple entry and exit options (MEES).

Traditionally, degrees were conferred based on continuous study at a single institution. With ABC, students can attain a degree by accumulating credits from various universities, necessitating policy adjustments in academic governance. Universities must establish clear guidelines on minimum credit requirements, credit equivalencies, and course mapping to ensure consistency across institutions.

The adoption of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) is poised to fundamentally reshape the role of teachers within higher education. Traditionally, faculty members have adhered to a structured, syllabus-driven teaching model, where students remain within a fixed curriculum for a defined period. However, with ABC, the focus transitions from the rigid delivery of course content to a more mentorship-based approach. Faculty members will be expected to guide students in the selection of credits, facilitate interdisciplinary learning, and foster competency development. Professors will need to adapt to multidisciplinary education methodologies, as ABC encourages students to explore courses across diverse disciplines. This shift necessitates the implementation of comprehensive faculty training programs, equipping educators with the skills to teach diverse subjects, integrate digital learning tools, and employ flexible teaching techniques. Teachers will be tasked with developing curriculum strategies that enable students to seamlessly integrate business studies with artificial intelligence, environmental sciences with economics, or humanities with digital technologies. This will enhance interdisciplinary education, preparing students to tackle complex problems in the modern workforce. Furthermore, there will be a heightened emphasis on experiential and industry-based learning models. As ABC supports integration with online platforms like SWAYAM, NPTEL, and Coursera, faculty members will need to redesign their coursework to incorporate industry case studies, live projects, virtual labs, and hands-on learning opportunities.



Institutions will be expected to forge collaborations with industries, research organizations, and skill development centers to provide students with real-world applications of academic concepts. Teachers will also play a pivotal role in evaluating student performance beyond traditional examinations. With the shift toward competency-based learning, educators must incorporate continuous assessments, portfolio-based evaluations, and project-based grading models. As students will accumulate credits from multiple institutions, teachers will require standardized evaluation frameworks to ensure that students meet the academic requirements necessary for degree completion. Finally, teachers must embrace technology-driven teaching approaches. The ABC system demands that faculty members become proficient in online education tools, virtual classroom platforms, digital content creation, and AI-powered student assessment tools. Universities must conduct faculty development programs and digital literacy workshops to facilitate a smooth transition for professors into this new paradigm.

6. Comparison of ABC with International Credit Systems

The Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) in India, while drawing inspiration from established global credit transfer frameworks, is tailored to address the unique characteristics of India's higher education landscape. It shares conceptual parallels with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the credit transfer models prevalent in the United States, yet significant operational distinctions set these systems apart. A primary point of divergence lies in the scope of operation. ABC predominantly functions at a national level, facilitating credit transfers between UGC-approved institutions within India. Conversely, the ECTS enjoys widespread acceptance across multiple countries within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), enabling seamless student mobility across national borders. In the United States, credit transfers are typically facilitated through inter-college articulation agreements, although the final decision regarding credit acceptance rests with individual universities.

Another notable difference pertains to credit validity. The ABC framework permits students to store and redeem academic credits for a period of up to seven years, striking a balance between flexibility and the maintenance of academic standards. In contrast, ECTS credits in Europe do not have an expiration date and can be utilized indefinitely. In the United States, credit validity is subject to institutional policies, with some universities imposing time limits on older credits.

The integration of online learning platforms represents another area where ABC distinguishes itself. ABC recognizes credits earned from Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offered on platforms such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, and Coursera, thereby enabling students to acquire credits outside the confines of traditional classrooms.

While the United States also acknowledges online learning credits, European universities have demonstrated a more limited integration of online courses into their credit transfer systems.

In terms of flexibility, ABC exhibits a high degree of adaptability, empowering students to pursue interdisciplinary courses, transfer credits across institutions, and utilize the Multiple Entry-Exit System (MEES) to take breaks in their academic journey. While the United States also offers flexibility through community colleges and credit transfers, the ECTS system in Europe adheres to a more structured model, where students must meet specific course equivalency requirements to facilitate credit transfers.

Despite its inherent advantages, ABC continues to grapple with challenges related to standardization and institutional. Although it has benefited from decades of refinement, ABC is still in its nascent stages. Indian institutions are required to align their curricula and grading structures to ensure seamless implementation. Over time, enhanced policy reforms and robust inter-university collaboration will be essential to optimize the efficiency of ABC within the Indian higher education ecosystem.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bal & Singh (2023) conducted an analysis of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's impact on higher education, underscoring its pivotal role as a catalyst for academic transformation within India. Their research emphasized the policy's dedication to fostering multidisciplinary learning, cultivating a student-centric educational environment, and enhancing institutional autonomy. Shifting focus to pedagogical changes, Laskar (2022) examined the transition from content-based learning to competency-based education under NEP 2020. This study highlighted the policy's promotion



of conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and student-centered pedagogy, effectively mitigating rote memorization and the over-reliance on traditional examination-based assessments. Expanding on the technological dimension, Alam (2021) discussed the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) within education as envisioned by NEP 2020. His study illuminated how digital learning tools, online resources, and virtual classrooms are reshaping India's educational landscape, bridging the urban-rural divide, and fostering inclusive learning environments. Halder (2023) provided a comprehensive overview of NEP 2020, focusing on its core principles—access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability. He posited that the policy aims to cultivate a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to learning, while simultaneously strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Govindharaj (2023) assessed the role of higher education institutions under NEP 2020, identifying challenges related to faculty training, infrastructure, funding, and policy implementation at the grassroots level. The study underscored the necessity for structured reforms to ensure the policy's successful execution. Das (2024) explored the impact of NEP 2020 on research and innovation within higher education, revealing that the policy encourages interdisciplinary research, academic collaborations, and skill-based learning, thereby aligning education with the evolving needs of industry and society. Jayalakshmi & Rani (2024) reviewed the prospects and challenges of NEP 2020, emphasizing the restructuring of the curriculum, the introduction of multiple exit options in degree programs, and the critical need for robust regulatory frameworks to monitor implementation. Prakash & Kumari (2023) investigated the opportunities and challenges associated with implementing NEP 2020 in higher education. Their study found that while the policy aims to enhance employability, improve the quality of education, and encourage internationalization, financial constraints and administrative complexities remain significant obstacles. Finally, Sundari et al. (2023) discussed the co-creation model of learning under NEP 2020, where students and teachers collaborate to enhance curriculum design and pedagogy, highlighting the importance of participatory learning and student engagement in achieving meaningful educational reforms.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research, grounded entirely in theoretical analysis, employs secondary data sources gathered from a diverse array of platforms, including government portals, academic research papers, policy documents, scholarly journals, and freely accessible online content. The study adopts a descriptive research approach, with the primary objective of analyzing the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) system as conceptualized and introduced under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The research delves into understanding the intricate functionalities, implementation strategies, multifaceted impacts, inherent challenges, and potential future prospects of ABC within the realm of higher education. The study is predicated on secondary data meticulously collected from a variety of sources, encompassing government websites such as those of the UGC, AICTE, MHRD, and NAD, as well as policy reports, educational research journals, online publications, and institutional white papers. Furthermore, articles from esteemed educational portals, newspapers, and research repositories like ResearchGate, Springer, JSTOR, and ScienceDirect have been thoroughly reviewed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The study has been organized into four distinct sections: an Introduction, which elucidates the concept and objectives of ABC; Implementation and Prospects, which examines ABC's role in enhancing flexibility, student mobility, and the global alignment of higher education; Challenges and Institutional Barriers, which identifies the difficulties encountered by universities, faculty, and students in adopting ABC; and a Conclusion, which presents key findings, recommendations, and potential future research directions. The analysis of data and insights derived from these sources has been employed to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the effectiveness of ABC, its potential impact on the higher education landscape, and the challenges that must be addressed for its successful implementation. It is important to note that this study does not involve primary data collection, as it relies primarily on existing literature and secondary sources to provide a well-rounded and nuanced perspective on the subject.:

IV. CONCLUSION

The implementation of multidisciplinary education under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a watershed moment, signaling a transformative shift in India's higher education landscape. By dismantling the long-standing



rigidities of academic silos and fostering a flexible, holistic, and skill-driven learning paradigm, NEP 2020 aspires to equip students with the diverse competencies essential for navigating an increasingly complex and dynamic global environment. The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) system, the integration of vocational education, and the emphasis on interdisciplinary studies collectively empower students to explore a broader spectrum of knowledge, nurturing creativity, innovation, and adaptability.

A key revelation from this study is the profound impact of multidisciplinary education on enhancing student employability by effectively bridging the gap between theoretical academic knowledge and practical real-world application. The policy encourages institutions to offer cross-disciplinary programs that seamlessly integrate fields such as science, humanities, business, and technology, ensuring that graduates emerge with a well-rounded and versatile skill set. Furthermore, the deliberate shift toward experiential learning, robust industry collaborations, and the strategic utilization of digital education platforms further solidifies students' preparedness for the contemporary workforce.

However, the research also illuminates several critical challenges that must be addressed to ensure the effective implementation of multidisciplinary education. Faculty training emerges as a paramount concern, as educators are required to adapt to novel teaching methodologies, embrace interdisciplinary approaches, and integrate technology-driven learning environments. Institutional restructuring is also imperative to support flexible curricular frameworks, competency-based assessments, and seamless credit transfers. Moreover, financial and infrastructural constraints—particularly prevalent in public and rural institutions—constitute significant barriers to fully realizing the policy's transformative potential.

The study further highlights the persistent socioeconomic disparities in access to multidisciplinary education. While elite institutions have successfully pioneered and implemented innovative interdisciplinary learning models, many underfunded colleges continue to grapple with outdated curricula and limited technological resources.

Addressing these inequalities through targeted policy interventions, strategic government funding, and well-designed scholarship programs is essential to guarantee equitable access to high-quality education for all.

Looking forward, the ultimate success of NEP 2020's multidisciplinary education model hinges on effective collaboration among policymakers, educational institutions, and industry stakeholders. Continuous evaluation, robust faculty development programs, sustained investment in digital infrastructure, and the implementation of student-centric policies are indispensable to maintaining the momentum of these reforms. By proactively addressing and overcoming implementation barriers, India can establish a world-class higher education system that not only meets the evolving demands of the 21st-century job market but also cultivates critical thinkers, fosters innovators, and nurtures lifelong learners.

In conclusion, while NEP 2020 provides a robust foundation for multidisciplinary education, its enduring impact will be determined by the agility and effectiveness with which institutions adapt to this new paradigm. Through strategic planning, meaningful stakeholder engagement, and sustained investment, multidisciplinary education has the potential to fundamentally redefine India's academic ecosystem, making it more inclusive, globally competitive, and future-ready.

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