



## INTRODUCTION OF 'ABC' BY NPE 2020 AND POSSIBILITIES OF CONNECTIVISM



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### Abstract

The introduction of Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) by NPE 2020 is a great provision for students which help them open a unique or individual Academic Bank Account in digital mode. The academic credit of a student is scored and transferred using this mechanism for educational service. It will be an impetus for them to favor blended mode of learning which provides opportunities to earn credits from different Higher Education Institutions of their choice which are registered under this scheme. In this context, it is truly relevant to have an idea about the theory of Connectivism and its practical implementation in the field of Higher Education. The boundaries of old learning theories including constructivism have been denounced by connectivism which serves as a theoretical framework for understanding learning in this digital age. NPE 2020 announces modifications in several aspects of education including the mode and assessment. These changes may reflect in the total realm of education as well as in the society. The basic nature of our society is the constant change in all walks of life, and this is reflected in the theory of connectivism. It is a network theory of learning in which internet devices come in handy for accessing the global resources. This paper tries to reflect the idea of learning which can be made easy with technological assistance. NPE suggests that a huge amount of knowledge is within the hands of learner through the online platforms. Courses undergone by the students through the online modes shall be considered for credit transfer and credit accumulation. This paper, therefore, explains the possibilities of connectivism in the introduction of ABC, which is a national level facility in higher education institutions across the country.

**Keywords:** *ABC, Connectivism, Higher Education Institutions.*



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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Exigency to embrace change is the need of the time. New India thinks that implementation of education policies in accordance with the demands of the period would positively affect the development of the country. Education modifies the individuals in such a way that the innovative elements in it make them

creative think tanks of the future world. The great poet Alfred Lord Tennyson has rightly remarked, "the old order changeth yielding place of new, and God fulfils Himself in many ways (Agrawal, S., Sharma, N., & Bhatnagar, S. 2021)." This comment reminds us of the changes that have been incorporated by the various National Education Policies during different periods.

The old National Education Policies (1968 & 1986) have gone through the changes and replaced with the National Education Policy 2020 with remarkable modifications. Being approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020, NPE 2020 aims a visible transformation in the education system of India by 2040 by incorporating reasonable changes from elementary to higher education sectors (A.L. Basham, 2004).

Creation of a vibrant and equitable knowledge society with high quality education is the primary aim of NPE 2020. School education will be divided into foundational stage and preparatory stage and the undergraduate program will provide a multidisciplinary bachelor's degree which enables the students with multiple exit options. NPE 2020 envisions a kind of education in India which is experiential, holistic, inquiry-driven, and totally learner centered (Sharma, S. G., Jiwane, Y., & Tiwari, R, 2020). It is considered as the reformative and transformative step towards providing a quality education for "All."

## 2. HIGHER EDUCATION

NPE 2020 has brought fundamental changes in the field of higher education. Institutional restructuring and consolidation are the key factors to be noted. NPE 2020 suggests holistic and multidisciplinary education in the higher education sector. Optimal learning is to be followed and the students will be provided maximum support in their learning process. Internalization of knowledge and student and faculty progression are the major aims. Value education and vocational education are also given emphasis in it. The establishment of National Research Foundation for Academic Research will boost the progression of regulatory system in higher education and may stop the commercialization of higher education. To ensure effective governance and leadership for HEIs is the aim of NPE 2020. Total reformation in the realm of higher education is the main policy of NPE 2020. The reformation of higher education is mentioned in part II of NPE 2020 (Varghese N. V., Anupam Pachauri, and Sayantan Mandal, 2019).

## 3. ABC

A much-awaited change in the realm of higher education has been heralded by the introduction of UGC's Academic Bank of Credits (ABC). Through this, a customized learning path can be given to students which may provide amazing democracy to students in their learning career. It can be understood as a virtual database that will keep the academic credits of students. It offers several services to students who are treated as customers in this commercial banking system.

ABC, the educational digital platform, is created to facilitate students' mobility within the various HEIs. Credit recognition, credit accumulation, credit transfer and credit redemption are the various means through which the HEIs execute this facility. This method ensures flexible teaching learning process. It gives unprecedented democracy to learners. The National e-Governance Division (NeGD) of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitYn) is the creator of the ABC. It is based on the DigiLocker framework which is a flagship initiative of the MeitYn under the Digital India programme.

## 4. HOW DOES ABC FUNCTION?

[www.abc.gov.in](http://www.abc.gov.in) is the portal for accessing Academic Bank of Credits website. Using a unique ID, every institution and individual can open their own accounts and enjoy the access to the portal. The students who register with their mobile number will get this ID through Digilocker. The students share the ID with the institution in which they got admitted. After registration, they can log in from the registered mobile to have access to the ABC Dashboard. Here they can view their credits. What makes ABC remarkable is the chance for the students to select the courses of their interest and earn credits. Also, they can transfer these credits to other institute of their choice. It is up to the institute to accept or reject the transfer. Every activity will be reflected in the account of the students.

## 5. BLENDED MODE OF LEARNING

By allowing students to earn credits from the various HEIs of their choice, the ABC platform initiates the mode of blended learning in education. The various institutions must be registered under this ABC scheme and also some online repository of courses such as SWAYAM. For credit transfer and credit accumulation, the courses undergone through the online modes will be considered. This advantage also will be an attraction of ABC. And, here relies the significance of making use of the theory of connectivism in the future education scenario (Owo, O. T., & Isaac, U. C. 2021).

## 6. CONNECTIVISM

Connectivism is a learning theory about forming connections between people and the technologies. The technologies include web browsers, wikis, search engines, social networks and various online platforms. George Siemens and Stephen Downes are associated with Connectivism. The principles of the theories such as behaviorism, cognitivism and even constructivism are denied by connectivism. It is all about understanding learning in a digital age. It is for today's society which is constantly changing. It is the group of complex ideas, networked to form specific information. When we apply the theory of connectivism in learning, the core skills develop are

the ability to see connections between information sources and to maintain that connections to facilitate continual learning. As far as method, content and place of learning are concerned, connectivism is a mode of transcending traditional learning.

Connectivism enhances students' learning by helping them gain knowledge and perception through an additional network. There is a collaboration of 'share' and 'learn'. Online platforms help students gain a huge amount of knowledge. Further knowledge can be achieved in this way. Learning with the technological assistance makes it easy. Learning takes place by connecting different sources simultaneously. Connectivism proposes that learning resides in non-human devices and it rests in the diversity of opinion. In order to have continual learning, nurturing and maintaining connections is needed. This is possible through connectivism. Connectivism aims accurate and up-to date knowledge. This is also possible through connectivism.

## 7. POSSIBILITIES OF CONNECTIVISM IN NPE 2020

NPE 2020 aims to promote student centric education by focusing on learner friendly teaching approaches. It allows students to have opportunities for selecting the best courses of their own interest, and to undergo interdisciplinary approach. It has an additional advantage of learning at their own pace. UGC has introduced this program to bring innovations in the field of education. Now it is a vital part of NPE 2020.

ABC requires the students to be proficient in using internet devices for accessing the global resources. It is a platform where the students can be consumers of different sources. Connectivism encourages students to be creative learners having self-pace. It helps in learning, teaching and evaluating. The students will be well aware of their credits during their course period. It helps students in group communication, professional development, group discourses and sharing media which constitute the focus area of NPE in implementing ABC in the HEIs.

## 8. IMPLICATIONS OF ABC THROUGH CONNECTIVISM

The introduction of ABC following the principles of connectivism will make educators critical experimenters with the help of new tools and services. Extending the range of media will help the students to be active participants in the digital world of learning. They will be encouraged and supported to go beyond institutional boundaries. This is possible by making educational resources openly available to all students at any time. Then learning takes place anywhere and anytime without any limitations of boundaries of country.

## 9. CONCLUSION

This paper brings to notice the introduction of ABC in the NPE 2020 along with the implementation of the pedagogic principles of connectivism. Multi-disciplinary and inter disciplinary approaches are encouraged in it. The ABC program helps students to gain better job opportunities with the provision of multiple exit options in it. This is possible only because of the online mode of education. NPE focuses online mode of education along with offline mode. This paves the way for implementing connectivist principles in education rather than constructivism. NPE recognizes it as the need of the hour. Therefore, the connectivist learner and teacher have more important role than the constructivist learner and teacher. Everything is connected to each other. Education is not an exception. The skilled individuals are the backbone of a nation. So, let us enjoy the new methods and programs as providers of positive impact in the field of education.

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