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CBCSS, An Innovation In University Education: A Study From The Perspective Of College Teachers Of Mahatma Gandhi University In Kerala

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Abstract

Indian higher education system is both enormous and complex. It has unleashed a major program of reforms. In purview with such reforms University Grants Commission (UGC) has made many changes with regard to the higher education system. CBCSS or 'Choice based Credit Semester and grading pattern' was a prominent reform. Mahatma Gandhi regulations are framed in accordance with UGC guidelines. The purpose of this study was to better understand the innovations in University education and CBCSS from the perspective of teachers of colleges falling under MG University.

Keywords: Performance, Consistency, Gradual Development, Education System, Training

Indian Education System is one of the largest and oldest systems found anywhere in the world. Unfortunately such an old system has not been evolved as best learning and training system globally and this pitiable situation have been reflected across elementary to tertiary level. Tertiary education earlier was offered by Universities from their own premises. Earlier, the teaching and learning process were based on annual scheme or end-of-the-year examination method, where evaluation of the students' performance was taken once in a year. It has been globally established that this old method of learning experience of the



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students' vis-a-vis the time spent and students' integrity to the course is poor and therefore this method of education is in oblivion in the education system of developed countries. Unfortunately, most of the Universities in India still follow the same old method. Therefore, UGC in its 12th five year plan is emphasizing on introducing Semester based system of teaching and training process in Universities where students' performance is evaluated in every six months. This system is more intensive, focused, rigorous learning process and as a result beneficial to the students' community. However, active engagement and workload of teachers' increases substantially in this method of teaching and training process and therefore a degree of resistance has surfaced in switching to Semester mode even among some of the leading University in the country like Delhi University.

There is another modern and more flexible method called Choice Based Credit & Semester System (CBCSS) has been adopted by few Central Universities and institutions of national importance like IITs. The CBCS system is more flexible and learning centric method, but implementation of this CBCSS scheme demands better Human Teaching and Training Resources in the departments and better laboratory infrastructure for the practical subjects. By and large, most of the Colleges affiliated to State Universities cannot satisfy the infrastructural requirements introducing CBCSS course and therefore in most of the cases the implementation of this system has been done by Central Universities and IITs where the courses mostly offered from the own premises. Therefore it will be a better or more practical approach to adopt the improvements of teaching and learning methods within the ambit of semester system at this moment for State Universities and its affiliated Colleges. In this regard, a compilation of Universities and the format of offering courses in the UGC website for public awareness might be appreciated and will appear beneficial to the student and parent community in seeking admission to various Universities.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

As the study is based on a new system implemented, which is of a complex nature this study has an unquestionable importance. Work satisfaction is the main success of any organization, whether it is an industry, office or education. The Government of India is spending Millions of Rupees in education field an year. Thus they should make sure that this amount spent for the education investment is not a waste. Education investment is an actual development investment. Thus all the citizens of India should get the benefit of the money spent by the Government. Here, teachers and their attitude towards the implementation of CBCSS are studied. Thus, there is much importance for this study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

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CBCSS, An Innovation In University Education: A Study From The Perspective Of College Teachers Of
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1. To know whether teachers and students are satisfied with the present CBCSS of MG University.
2. To bring out the major problems faced by the CBCSS of MG University.
3. To check whether the CBCSS has empowered students with more practical knowledge and in-depth knowledge about subjects they learn, which makes them more competent.
4. To check whether the CBCSS has affected the extra-curricular as well as creativity of students.
5. To know about the effective time management, whether all activities are done as scheduled (i.e.; exams are conducted on time, time for assignments, seminars and practical's, etc...)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Source of Data

Source of Data includes both Primary and Secondary Data. Primary Data is first hand information collected by means of questionnaire, personal interview etc. Secondary Data are those which have been collected by some other person for any other purpose. It can be collected from Newspaper, Online Articles, Websites, and Books etc. For the theoretical nourishment of the presentation, all the ways said above was referred.

Sample Size

Sampling is selecting number of respondents for the purpose of conducting the study. In this study 100 Teachers of Colleges falling under MG University were selected.

Tools for Analysis and Data Interpretation

Analysis

1. Percentage Analysis.

Pictorial Representation

1. Column Charts
2. Pie Charts
3. Bar Diagrams

PRESENT HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

India's higher education system is the second largest in the world, after the United States. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and the state. Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by 12 autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission.



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Semester system is a system under which academic year or period is divided into 2 equal halves i.e.; 12-15 weeks in a year. It is totally different from the Year system under which assessment was done once in a year by Annual Examinations. Evaluation procedure is done at the end of each semester and the result is published. In semester system, subjects are said as courses and credits are given for each course. A student must qualify these credits for successful completion of the programme. Suppose, MG university gives a bachelor in Science, Arts or commerce only if the candidate qualifies the predetermined credit points for the particular degree (In MGU it is 120 in case of Bachelor degree). Different courses have different credit points. Main subjects of the stream are given higher value of credit. Relatively less important subjects are given less credit point. Usually, a university following the Credit & Semester System allows the final year degree students to pursue an open course which they like. Thus there is an added advantage with Semester system. Open course may be any subject available in the college in which the student studies.

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY- PROFILE

Mahatma Gandhi University, one of the five affiliating universities in Kerala, is the premier educational institution that strives to fulfil the higher educational needs of the people of Central Kerala. Set on the sprawling 110-acre campus called Priyadarshini Hills at Athirampuzha, 13 kms off Kottayam, the University also has seven satellite campuses in parts of Kottayam and the neighbouring districts. The University was established on 2nd October 1983 and has jurisdiction over the revenue districts of Kottayam, Ernakulam, Idukki and parts of Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha. It is a University that conducts a range of programmes at the undergraduate, postgraduate, M Phil and doctoral levels through its 16 University Departments, 7 Self-Financing Departments, 82 Aided Affiliated Colleges (of which 8 are Colleges with Potential for Excellence), 158 Unaided Affiliated Colleges and 73 Recognized Research Institutes. At present Mahatma Gandhi University offers research programmes in over forty disciplines through its own Schools as well as through its approved research centres. The University has close collaboration for academic, research and extension programmes with a number of national agencies and institutions including the UGC, FIST, DRS, ISRO, COSIT, CSIR, DAAD, STEC, ICMR, BARC, MOEF, ICCR, ICHR, IED, IIFT, Institute of Chinese Studies and the Sahitya Akademi. The University is also involved in active collaboration with research institutions of international reputation such as the Max Planck Institute of Technology, Germany, Brown University, USA, University of Nantes, France, California Institute of Technology, USA, University of Toronto, Canada, Catholic



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University, Belgium, Heidelberg University, Germany, and the Institute of Political Studies, Rennes, France.

CREDIT & SEMSTER SYSTEM OF MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

The teaching programmes in MG University are conducted under the Credit and Semester System (CBCSS) in the statutory departments of teaching and research, organized as interdisciplinary Schools, are marked by their innovative curricula and their learner-oriented approaches. CBCSS is a student-friendly system that fosters interactive acquisition of knowledge in a multi-disciplinary context. The students are made familiar with the latest developments in their subjects of study.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

GRADE AND GRADE POINT

The evaluation of each course comprises of Internal and External components in the ratio 1:4 for all the courses. Grades and (grade points are given on a 7- point scale on the percentage of total marks (Internal+ External) as given in Table . Decimals are to be corrected to the next higher whole number.

CREDIT POINT AND REDIY POINT AVERAGE

Credit point (CP) of a course is calculated using the formula $CP = C \times GP$, where C = Credit; GP= Grade Point.

Grade Point Average of a Semester (SCPA) or Cumulative Credit Point Average (CCPA) for a programme is calculated using the formula,

$SCPA \text{ or } CCPA = \frac{TCP}{TC}$ where TCP- Total Credit Point and TC= Total Credit

SG= Semester Grade

A separate minimum of 30% marks each for internal and external (for both theory and practical) and aggregate minimum of 40% are required for a pass in a programme, a separate minimum of Grade E for all the individual courses and an overall Grade E or above are mandatory. If candidate secures Grade F for any one of the courses offered in a semester/ programme only Grade F will be awarded for that Semester/ Programme until the candidate improves this to Grade E or above within the permitted period.

% OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE POINT
90 AND ABOVE	A+= OUTSTANDING	10
80-89	A= EXCELLENT	9
70-79	B= VERY GOOD	8
60-69	C= GOOD	7



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50-59	D= SATISFACTORY	6
40-49	E= ADEQUATE	5
BELOW 40	F= FAILURE	4

Grades for the different Semesters and overall programme are given based on the corresponding CPA as shown in Table II

CPA	GRADE
ABOVE 9	A+ = OUTSTANDING
ABOVE 8 BUT ≤ 9	A= EXCELLENT
ABOVE 7 BUT ≤ 8	B= VERY GOOD
ABOVE 6 BUT ≤ 7	C= GOOD
ABOVE 5 BUT ≤ 6	D= SATISFACTORY
ABOVE 4 BUT ≤ 5	E= ADEQUATE
≤ 4	F= FAILURE

(Source: Secondary Data)

In this study, an attempt has been made to investigate the effectiveness of CBCSS from the perspective of teachers.

- STUDENTS LACK CONTENT KNOWLEDGE**

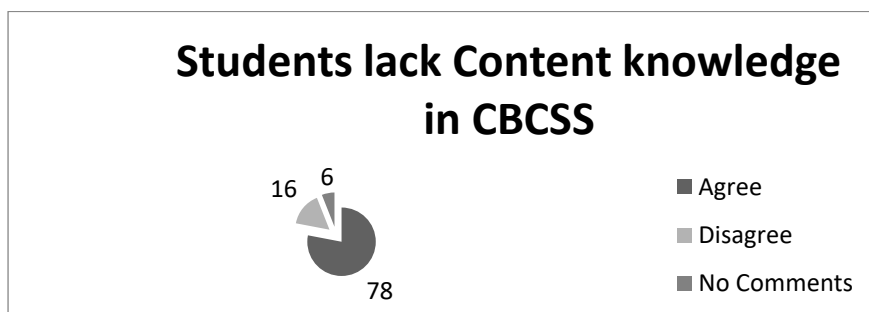


Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, 78 agree with the statement “In CBCSS, students lack content knowledge.” 16 teachers have opposite opinion that the students have enough content knowledge. 6 teachers have no opinion in this matter.

- THERE IS SUFFICIENT TIME FOR DETAILED STUDY OF EACH SUBJECT**



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There is sufficient time for detailed study of each subjects.

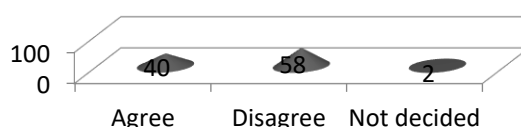


(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows the opinion of teachers towards time factor in CBCSS. Out of 100 teachers studied, 84 said that there is no sufficient time for detailed/deep study of each subjects taught under CBCSS. 14 agreed that there is enough time for detailed/deep study of subjects taught. 2 had no opinion on this issue.

- **ENOUGH TIME IS THERE FOR CONDUCTING ALL ACTIVITIES SAID IN THE CURRICULUM**

Enough time is there for conducting all activities said in the curriculum(Assignments, seminars etc.)



(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that, out of 100 teachers studied, 58 said that there is no enough time for conducting all activities such as assignments, seminars, 2 internals, viva etc said in the curriculum. 40 opined that there is enough time for conducting all activities said in the curriculum. And, 2 had no opinion on this issue.

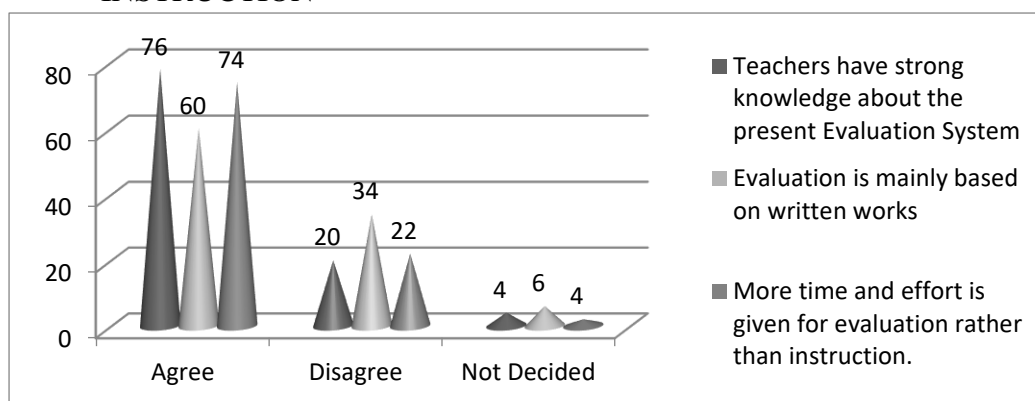
- **TEACHERS HAVE STRONG KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE PRESENT EVALUATION SYSTEM**
- **EVALUATION IS MAINLY BASED ON WRITTEN WORK**



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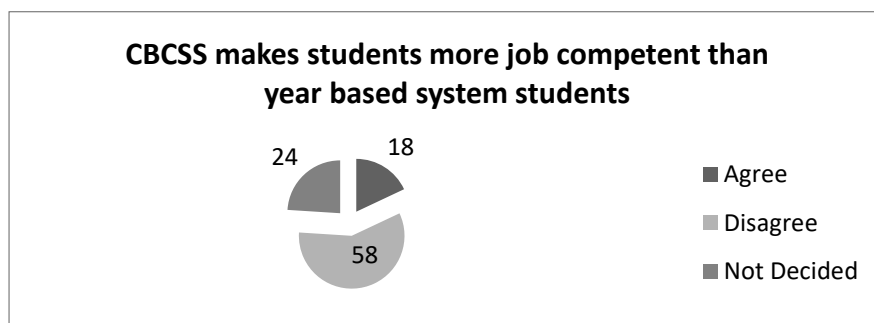
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- MORE IMPORTANCE IS GIVEN TO EVALUATION RATHER THAN INSTRUCTION



This figure throws light on the response towards the present evaluation system of CBCSS. It shows that, even though the present evaluation system is complicated and complex, 76 out of 100 said that they had strong knowledge about the evaluation system and procedures. 20 said the truth that they don't have thorough knowledge about the present evaluation system. 4 have not even decided whether they have knowledge about the present evaluation system or not. Out of 100 studied, 60 agreed with the fact that evaluation is mainly based on written work. That means, seminars, attendance, viva and others don't play an important role in evaluation of a student. 34 disagreed with it and 6 had no opinion. 74 out of 100 opined that "More time and effort is given for evaluation rather than Instructions" which means majority of teachers time is wasted by evaluation of internals, seminars, viva, assignments and going behind its totaling grading etc. There is no sufficient time for teaching and instructing. 22 did not agree with the statement, and 4 remained silent.

- CBCSS BASED STUDENTS ARE MORE JOB-COMPETENT THAN YEAR-BASED STUDENTS



(Source: Primary Data)

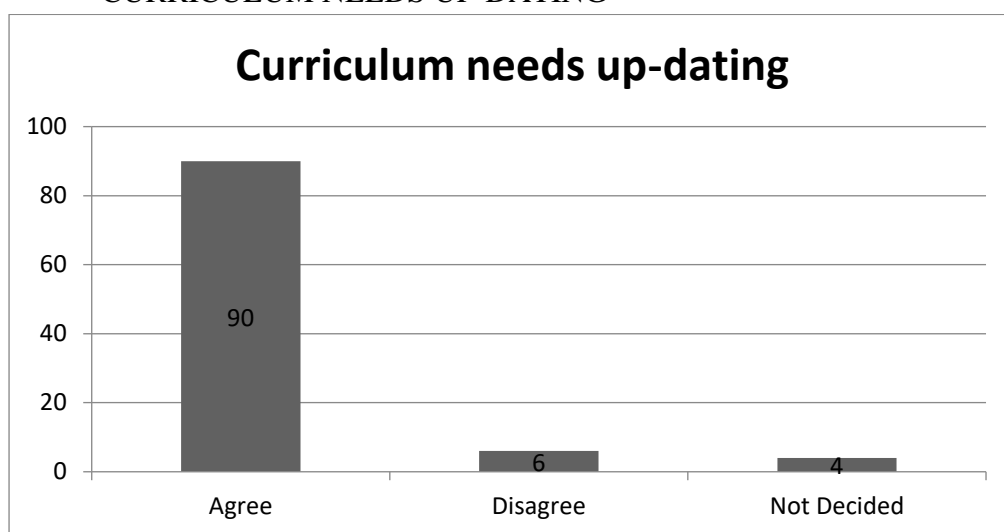


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Figure shows the opinion of teachers on evaluating the job competency of students under CBCSS in comparison with Year-system based students. Of 100 teachers studied, 58 disagreed with the statement “Study under CBCSS makes students more job competent than year system based students.” Whereas, 18 agreed with the statement and 24 had no opinion on this statement.

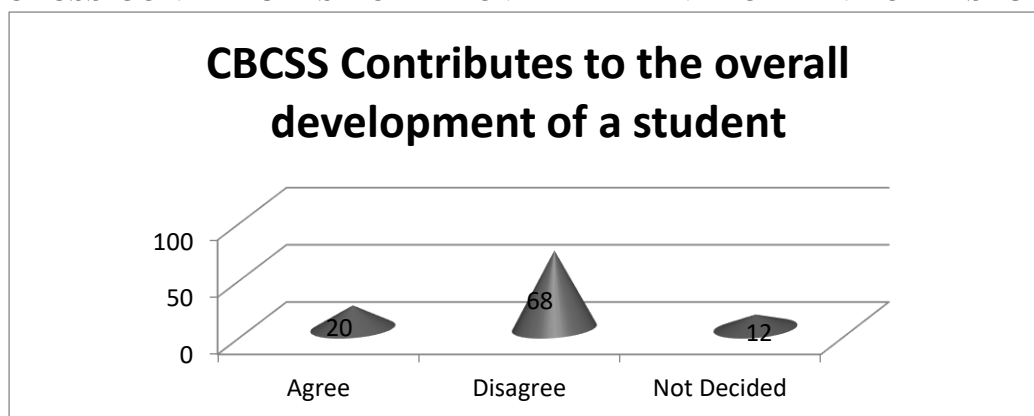
- CURRICULUM NEEDS UP-DATING**



(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, 90 opined that the CBCSS curriculum needs updating from time to time. 6 opined CBCSS curriculum did not need updating. And, 4 remained silent on this issue.

- CBCSS CONTRIBUTES TO THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF A STUDENT**



(Source: Primary Data)

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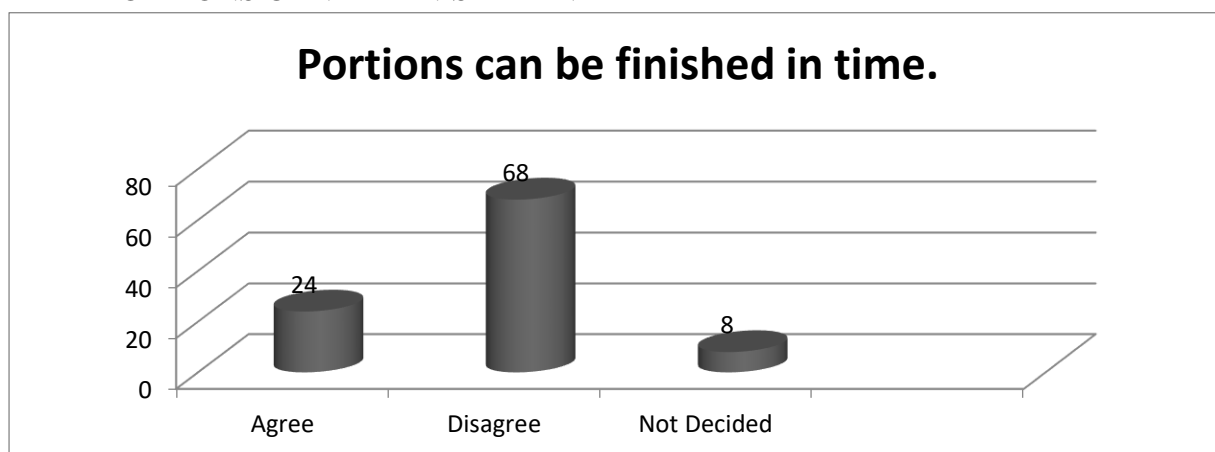


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Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, a majority of 68 disagrees with the statement “CBCSS contributes to the overall development of a student.” 20 teachers agree with the statement. And, 12 do not have any opinion regarding this matter.

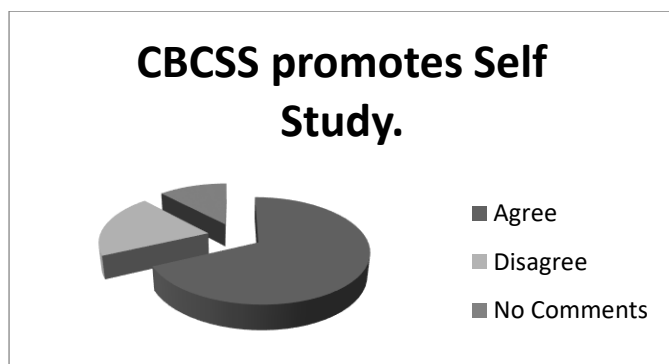
- PORTIONS CAN BE FINISHED IN TIME



(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, a majority of 68 opined that they cannot complete portions in time. They use various other methods such as taking extra classes on Saturdays and public holidays to finish portions. 24 said that they can complete portions within the given time. 8 do not have an opinion regarding this matter.

- CBCSS PROMOTES SELF-STUDY



(Source: Primary Data)

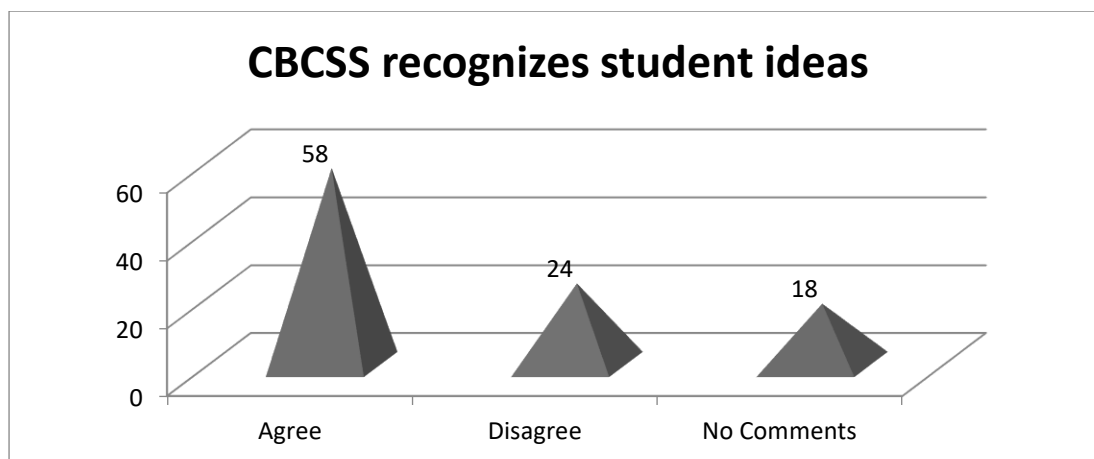
From Figure , we can see that a majority of 68% agrees that CBCSS promotes self study. 20% disagrees and 12% does not have any opinion. It's a positive aspect of the CBCSS of MG University.

- CBCSS RECOGNIZES STUDENTS IDEAS



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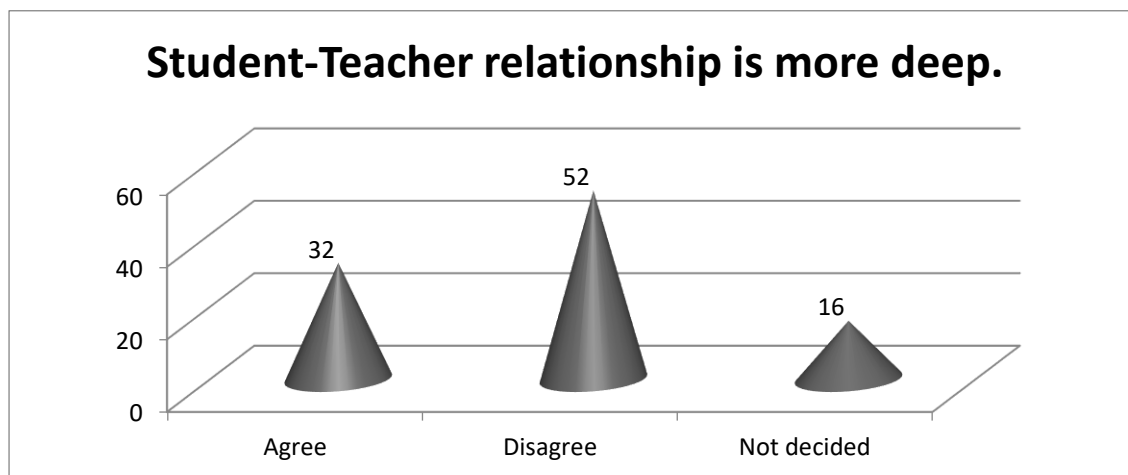
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(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that, out of 100 teachers studied, 58 opined that CBCSS recognizes students ideas as students are given time for seminars and are given assignments. 24 disagree with this statement and 18 had no opinion regarding this matter.

- STUDENT – TEACHER RELATIONSHIP IS DEEPER



(Source: Primary Data)

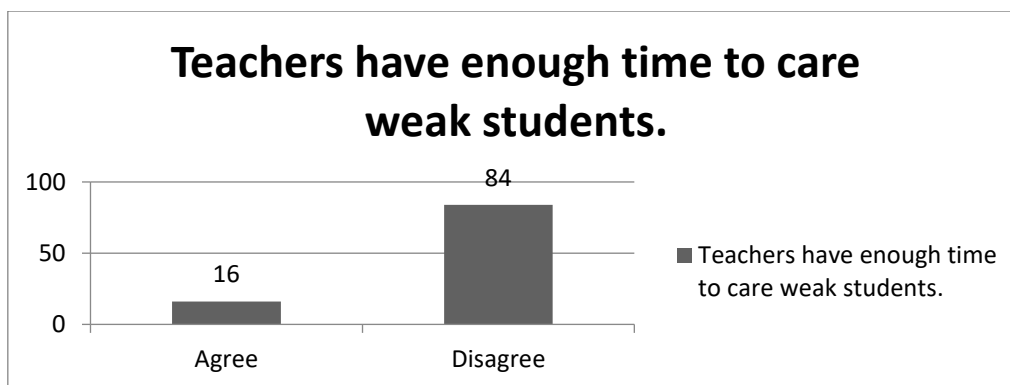
Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, 32 agreed that Teacher-Student relationship is deeper. A majority of 52 teachers disagreed to this statement. 16 teachers had no opinion on this matter.

- TEACHERS HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO CARE WEAK STUDENTS



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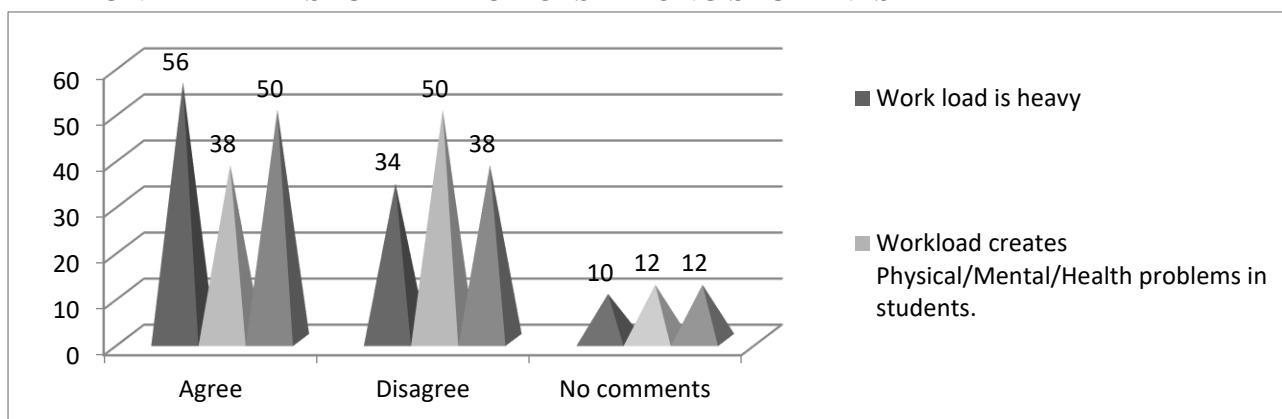


(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, 84 teachers opined that they don't have enough time for considering and giving enough care for academically weak students. 16 teachers agreed that they have enough time for considering academically weak students.

WORK LOAD RELATED MATTERS

- WORK LOAD IS HEAVY
- HEAVY WORKLOAD CREATES PHYSICAL/MENTAL/HEALTH PROBLEMS IN STUDENTS
- WORKLOAD AND PRESENT EVALUATION PROCEDURE DEVELOPS UNHEALTHY STUDY PRACTICES AMONG STUDENTS



(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that, out of 100 respondents studied, 56 teachers responded that "Workload under CBCSS is more" for both teachers and students. Students are forced to do more work beyond their capacity in less time and teachers are loaded with paper works and clericals too. 34 teachers disagreed with this statement. 10 teachers had no opinion on this

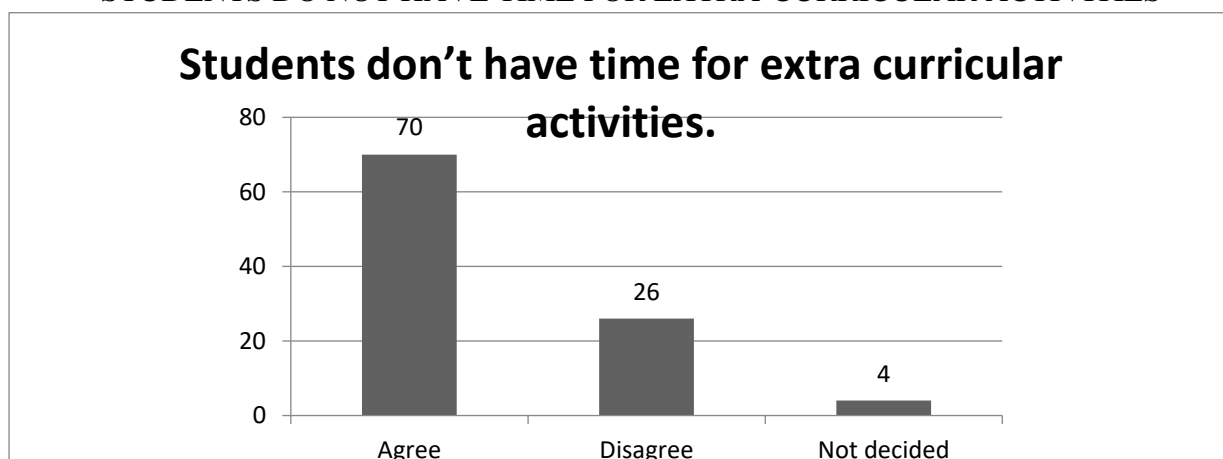


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issue. At the same time it also shows that, 38 out of 100 teachers opined that “*heavy workload creates Physical/Mental/Health problems in students.*” 50 teachers disagreed to it and 12 teachers had no opinion on this issue. Out of 100 teachers studied, 50 teachers opined that “*Workload and the present evaluation procedure develop unhealthy study habits among students.*” 38 teachers disagreed to this statement and 12 teachers had no opinion on this issue too.

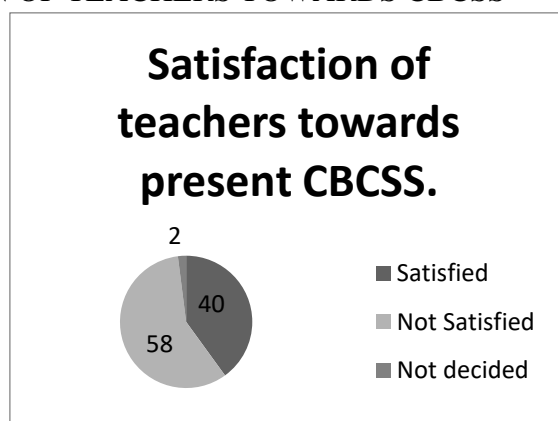
- STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE TIME FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



(Source: Primary Data)

Figure shows that out of 100 teachers studied, 70 opined that *students under CBCSS don't have enough time to be active in extracurricular activities.* 26 disagreed with it and 4 did not have any comments regarding the matter.

- SATISFACTION OF TEACHERS TOWARDS CBCSS



(Source: Primary Data)



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Figures shows that out of 100 teachers studied, a slight majority of 58 opined that they are not satisfied with the present CBCSS and its curriculum, due to the pre discussed topics. 40 teachers are fully satisfied with the present system. And 2 do not have any opinion.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Majority of teachers studied, 58 out of 100 are not satisfied with the present CBCSS of MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, which means 58% are not satisfied with the present system.

Another crucial finding of the study is that a majority of 78 of 100 (78%) has an opinion that, in general, *“students under CBCSS lacks content knowledge.”*

Almost 84% of the respondents are of an opinion that *“there is no sufficient time for detailed study of each subjects taught.”* It implies that, under CBCSS students simply study many subjects but there is no use, and the study is mainly for the exam purpose and mark obtainment. A majority of 58% opines that, *there is no enough time to conduct all activities said in the curriculum*(such as assignments, seminars, internals etc). But they manage to finish those activities despite of difficulties faced by them. These are due to the present political and social factors in Kerala.

Next findings are about the Evaluation system.

- A. Majority of 60% opined that, evaluation is mainly based on written works done by a student. Which means exams both internal and external, and assignments play significant role in the final result. All other activities have less weightage.
- B. 74% of the respondents observed that, more time and effort is given for Evaluation rather than instruction.

Another important finding was that, a majority of 58% opined that, *“students under CBCSS have no added advantage of getting jobs easily or job competency as compared to year-system based students.”* 90% of the respondents opined that the present CBCSS curriculum needs up-dating. It should be made more competent and up-to-date. A majority of 68% agreed with the statement, *“CBCSS does not contribute to the overall development of students”*

Majority of 68% stated that *“Portions cannot be finished in time”*

A positive finding is that, a majority of 58% opined that *“CBCSS recognizes students ideas”*. A majority of 84% opined that, they *do not get enough time to care academically weak students*. It may be due to over load of work.

These findings are about work load:



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A. A majority of 56% opined that, *“workload under CBCSS is heavy.”*

B. 50% opined that *“heavy workload and evaluation procedure develops un-healthy study habits among students.”*

A majority of 70% opined that, *“Students under CBCSS does not have enough time for Extra-curricular activities as compared to old Students.”*

SUGGESTIONS

From the detailed study done and in the light of findings, there are certain suggestions for checking the problems encountered by the present CBCSS of MG University. They are enlisted below:

1. The decision of splitting annual vacation into two should be re-thought. An opinion survey should be conducted with all concerned departments and teachers of all the colleges.
2. Important decisions regarding academic as well as University related matters should be discussed with teachers, so that they get a feeling of being considered. An open link should be made available in the university website for posting the teachers opinions regarding various matters in connection with academics, syllabi and curriculum.
3. Over political influence is the major problem of the University. Decisions taken should be based on what the university demands and for the sole aim that the education quality enhancement.
4. As time is a major concern, the curriculum should be re-structured in such a way that work load is reduced, both in teachers and students side.

CONCLUSION

The study points out that the teachers have not yet fully accepted the CBCSS in their mindset. It also shows that Semester System would be effective only if the student ratio is small, but in most colleges the student ratio is big. Also the teaching time in semester system is very less i.e. 4 months owing, to holidays and exams coming in between. Because of lack of time, the students have also literally stopped going to the library to consult books. The findings also prove that teachers do not get enough time to attend the weaker students and give them extra coaching. The teachers also do not get sufficient time to attend to their responsibilities and the overload causes exhaustion. We can see that the respondents are not in tune with the new system.

As the study is nearing to its end, it throws light on certain major problems affected by the CBCSS of MG University. All the results obtained from the research are exclusively based



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on the questionnaire prepared for the study. The main problem affecting the implementation of Semester-System in a state like Kerala is the people's reluctance to work and achieve results. In case of Semester system implementation, we do not have an opinion that it is a total failure. But the implementation was not scientific. Semester system implementation was successful at CHRIST UNIVERSITY, DELHI UNIVERSITY and all the CENTRAL UNIVERSITIES. The same way, gradually MG University would also become successful. As Kerala is highly literate state, people of Kerala can understand and accept changes. Looking on to the modern generation to make changes by taking all the positives into consideration their forefathers have given them, we conclude this study.

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<<http://www.mguniversity.edu.in>>