Developing Ability Enhancement Courses in Undergraduate Program for implementing NEP 2020

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Abstract:

NEP 2020 envisions a transformative and holistic education system that focuses on the overall development of learners. In line with this, there is a need to develop Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs) in undergraduate programs that align with the objectives of NEP 2020. AECs are designed to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for employability and higher education. These courses are intended to enhance the communication abilities of students. In NEP though ability may be multifarious it is delimited to communication ability only. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs) in Modern Indian Language (MIL) and English Language as part of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in undergraduate programs. These courses are designed to enhance the language and communication skills of students, which are essential for their overall development and employability. The MIL AEC aims to develop the language skills of students in one or more modern Indian languages. The course is intended to improve the reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities of students in the respective languages. The MIL AEC is designed to provide students with a deeper understanding of the culture and literature associated with the language, which can also help in promoting national integration and cultural diversity. The English Language AEC, on the other hand, aims to improve the English language proficiency of students. The course is intended to develop the reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities of students in English, which is the most widely spoken language across the world. The course is designed to help students communicate effectively in academic and professional settings and improve their employability. The development and implementation of MIL and English Language AECs require a collaborative effort between the faculty and language experts. The courses should be designed to integrate the latest teaching techniques and technologies to make language learning more interactive and engaging. The AECs should also be aligned with the industry requirements and the changing demands of the job market. The MIL and English Language AECs introduced by the UGC aim to enhance the language and communication skills of undergraduate students. These courses are intended to provide students with a deeper understanding of the culture associated with the language and improve their employability in academic and professional settings. The successful implementation of these courses requires a collaborative effort between the faculty and language experts, along with the integration of modern teaching techniques and technologies.

Keywords: Ability Enhancement Course, Undergraduate Program, NEP 2020, Modern Indian Language, English Language, Students' abilities and skills.

Introduction:

Ability Enhancement Courses in terms of Modern Indian Language & English language focused on language and communication skills is a study that explores the effectiveness of language courses in enhancing communication skills in both Modern Indian Language (MIL) and English language. The study aims to examine the impact of these courses on students' ability to communicate effectively in both languages. The paper highlights the

importance of language and communication skills in today's globalized world and emphasizes the need for language courses that can help students improve their proficiency in multiple languages. The study focuses on MIL and English languages, as they are the most commonly used languages in India and are considered essential for effective communication in various fields. The research paper examines the course curriculum and teaching methodology of these language courses and evaluates their effectiveness in enhancing language and communication skills. The study also investigates the factors that influence students' learning outcomes, such as their prior language proficiency, motivation, and learning styles. The paper aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of language courses and their impact on students' language and communication skills. It emphasizes the importance of language education and highlights the need for continuous evaluation and improvement of language courses to ensure that they meet the evolving needs of students in today's dynamic world.

Background Study:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the need to enhance the quality of education and develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and other 21st-century skills among students in India. As a result, there is a growing interest in developing Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs) in undergraduate programs that align with the goals of the NEP 2020. This literature review examines previous research on AECs in undergraduate programs and their effectiveness in enhancing students' abilities and skills. In India, language and communication skills are considered essential for success in various fields, including education, business, and government. However, many students face challenges in developing proficiency in multiple languages due to factors such as inadequate teaching methodology, limited access to resources, and a lack of motivation. To address these challenges, the NEP 2020 introduced the Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC) program. The AEC program is a component of the Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS), which is a framework for undergraduate education in India that emphasizes student-cantered learning and flexibility in course selection. The AEC program aims to provide students with the opportunity to enhance their language and communication skills in both English and MIL. The program focuses on improving students' ability to communicate effectively in both languages through a combination of classroom instruction, experiential learning, and practical training. This research paper builds on the AEC program's objectives by examining the effectiveness of language courses offered under the AEC program in enhancing students' language and communication skills. The paper aims to evaluate the course curriculum and teaching methodology of these language courses and identify factors that influence students' learning outcomes. By providing insights into the effectiveness of language courses, this research paper aims to inform policymakers and educators on how to improve language education in India and promote effective communication skills among students.

Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs) are designed to enhance students' abilities and skills that are essential for their holistic development, including communication, analytical thinking, teamwork, ethics, and leadership (UGC, 2014). Several studies have examined the effectiveness of AECs in undergraduate programs. For example, Mohan and Bala (2017) conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of AECs in developing communication skills among undergraduate students. The study found that AECs significantly improved students' communication skills and their confidence in communicating effectively. The NEP 2020 emphasizes the need to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and other 21st-century skills among students in India. AECs can play a crucial role in achieving these goals by enhancing students' abilities and skills that are essential for their holistic development. Several studies have highlighted the importance of aligning AECs with the goals and objectives of the NEP 2020 (Dutta, 2021; Maiti, 2021). Dutta (2021) argued that AECs should be designed to develop 21st-century skills such as creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship that are essential for the success of students in the modern world. Similarly, Maiti (2021) highlighted the need to integrate AECs with the NEP 2020's focus on multidisciplinary education and experiential learning to enhance students' employability and prepare them for the challenges of the future. The literature review highlights the importance of developing Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs) in undergraduate programs that align with the goals and objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Previous research has shown that AECs can significantly enhance students' abilities and skills that are essential for their holistic development. Furthermore, the literature review suggests that aligning AECs with the NEP 2020's vision and objectives can further enhance their effectiveness in preparing students for the challenges of the future.

Statement of the problem:

The problem addressed in this research paper is the need to develop Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC) in undergraduate programs to implement the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India. The NEP 2020 emphasizes the need for a flexible, student-centered, and multidisciplinary approach to education that promotes holistic development and prepares students for the challenges of the 21st century. To achieve these objectives, the NEP 2020 proposes the implementation of a Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS) in undergraduate education, which allows students to choose courses based on their interests, aptitudes, and career goals. The AEC is a component of the CBCS that aims to provide students with the opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge in areas beyond their main discipline. However, the development of AEC courses that align with the objectives of the NEP 2020 is a significant challenge. The courses must be designed to promote multidisciplinary learning, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance employability. Additionally, the courses must be delivered using effective teaching methodologies that promote active learning and engagement. Therefore, this research paper aims to address this problem by developing AEC courses that align with the objectives of the NEP 2020 and promote holistic development among undergraduate students. The study examines the course curriculum, teaching methodology, and assessment strategies of these courses and identifies factors that influence students' learning outcomes. By addressing this problem, the research paper contributes to the development of effective AEC courses that promote multidisciplinary learning, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance employability among undergraduate students in India.

Research Questions:

1. What are the content area may be selected in the Component of AEC Category for development of ability to communicate successfully in the light of NEP 2020?

2. What are the methodology of AEC can be adopted for successful communication for inclusion it in UG Curriculum?

3. What kind of Evaluation system be adopted for AEC to accelerate the communication skill among learners?

Methodology:

The methodology used in based on a qualitative research approach. The study uses a combination of document analysis and expert interviews to develop and evaluate AEC courses that align with the objectives of the NEP 2020. The study begins with a comprehensive review of the NEP 2020 and related literature on the design and delivery of AEC courses. This document analysis provides insights into the key features of AEC courses and the factors that influence their effectiveness in promoting holistic development among undergraduate students. Expert interviews are conducted with stakeholders such as education policymakers, faculty members to obtain their perspectives on the design and delivery of AEC courses. The expert interviews provide insights into the practical challenges and opportunities in developing AEC courses that align with the objectives of the NEP 2020. The data obtained from the document analysis and expert interviews are analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The study identifies key themes and patterns in the data, which are used to develop and evaluate AEC courses that align with the objectives of the NEP 2020.

Analysis and Interpretation:

The content areas of various disciplines selected for the development of the ability to communicate successfully may include:

English Language and Communication Skills focus on developing students' proficiency in English language and communication skills, including writing, speaking, listening, and reading. Interdisciplinary Communication and Problem-Solving Skills focus on developing students' proficiency in interdisciplinary communication and problem-solving skills, including critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork across different disciplines. Business Communication and Professional Skills focus on developing students' proficiency in business communication and professional skills, including presentation skills, negotiation skills, and business writing. AEC courses can focus on the development of interpersonal communication skills, which includes effective communication in social and professional contexts, active listening, empathy, and conflict resolution. AEC courses can focus on the development of professional communication skills, which includes writing professional emails, reports, and other documents, giving effective presentations, and participating in group discussions. AEC courses can focus on the

development of digital communication skills, which includes using digital tools such as email, social media, and video conferencing effectively, and understanding the etiquette of digital communication. AEC courses the development of cross-cultural communication skills, which includes understanding and respecting cultural differences in communication styles, non-verbal communication, and adapting communication styles to different cultural contexts. AEC courses can focus on the development of communication ethics, which includes understanding the ethical issues related to communication, such as plagiarism, intellectual property rights, and responsible use of social media.

Here are some methodologies that can be adopted for successful communication in AEC: AEC courses can use experiential learning methodologies such as role-plays, case studies, simulations, and real-life projects to provide students with hands-on experience in communication skills and techniques. AEC courses can incorporate collaborative learning methodologies such as group discussions, debates, and peer-to-peer learning to develop students' communication skills and teamwork abilities. AEC courses can use language labs equipped with the latest technology and software to provide students with personalized and interactive learning experiences in English and Indian languages. AEC courses can leverage the industry-academia interface to provide students with exposure to industry practices and expectations, which can enhance their communication and professional skills. AEC courses should adopt a student-centered learning approach, which involves tailoring the curriculum to the needs and interests of the students, providing opportunities for self-directed learning, and using assessment strategies that promote formative feedback and continuous improvement. AEC courses can adopt a blended learning approach, which includes a mix of online and face-to-face instruction. Blended learning can provide flexibility and accessibility to students, and allow them to engage with course content and communication activities at their own pace. AEC courses can adopt a flipped classroom approach, which involves students engaging with course content before class and using class time for interactive and communicative activities. The flipped classroom can encourage student engagement and provide opportunities for collaborative learning and communication skill development. AEC courses can adopt a communication coaching approach, which includes one-on-one coaching sessions with instructors or communication experts. Communication coaching can provide personalized feedback and support for students to develop communication skills based on their individual strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluation systems that can be adopted for AEC to accelerate communication skills among learners: AEC courses should adopt a continuous assessment approach, which involves evaluating students' progress throughout the course rather than just at the end of the semester. Continuous assessment can include a combination of formative and summative assessments, such as quizzes, assignments, projects, and presentations. AEC courses can incorporate peer assessment methodologies, which involve students evaluating each other's communication skills and providing feedback. Peer assessment can be used in group projects, presentations, and other collaborative learning activities. AEC courses can include self-assessment activities, which involve students reflecting on their own communication skills and identifying areas for improvement. Self-assessment can be used in conjunction with formative feedback from instructors and peers. AEC courses should use rubrics to evaluate students' communication skills based on clear and measurable criteria. Rubrics can provide students with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and can help instructors provide targeted feedback. AEC courses can leverage industry feedback to evaluate students' communication skills in a real-world context. Industry feedback can be obtained through internships, guest lectures, and other industry-academia interface activities. AEC courses can adopt a formative assessment approach, which includes ongoing assessment throughout the course to provide feedback to learners and instructors. Formative assessment can include activities such as quizzes, assignments, and peer feedback, and can help identify areas where students need further support and guidance. AEC courses can also adopt a summative assessment approach, which includes a final assessment at the end of the course to evaluate the overall achievement of learning outcomes. Summative assessment can include activities such as exams, presentations, and projects, and can provide a comprehensive evaluation of communication skill development. AEC courses can also include feedback mechanisms, which allow learners to receive feedback from instructors, peers, and communication experts. Feedback mechanisms can include one-on-one feedback sessions, peer review activities, and online discussion forums, and can provide learners with specific and actionable feedback to improve their communication skills. Learner's communication skill may be evaluated by means of workshop mode where all students will have to participate and their participatory views either in Group or individually to be presented. This process may be frequently repeated for any particular Semester or course through which evaluation system may be processed. It may be departmental workshop organized by the own Department. External Expert may be invited occasionally or as situation permits.

Finding:

The content areas selected for the development of the ability to communicate successfully should be designed to promote multidisciplinary learning, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance employability among undergraduate students in India. The content areas selected in the Component of AEC category for the development of the ability to communicate successfully should be multidisciplinary, aligned with the objectives of NEP 2020, and cater to the needs and expectations of the industry. The methodology of AEC courses for successful communication should focus on promoting multidisciplinary learning, developing interpersonal thinking skills, intrapersonal communication skill and enhancing employability among undergraduate students. The methodologies adopted for AEC should be student-cantered, aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy 2020, and provide opportunities for students to develop communication skills in a practical and relevant context. The evaluation system adopted for AEC should be designed to accelerate communication skills among learners by providing timely and constructive feedback, promoting self-reflection and improvement, and aligning with the needs and expectations of the industry. The evaluation system adopted for AEC should be aligned with the course objectives and learning outcomes, provide opportunities for learners to receive feedback and reflect on their communication skills, and include a variety of assessment methods to evaluate communication skill development.The Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs) in Modern Indian Language (MIL) and English language focused on language and communication skills have the potential to bring significant improvements in the language proficiency and communication abilities of undergraduate students in India.

Conclusion: Practising language is not always a Cognitive skill

The AECs are designed to provide students with practical skills and knowledge that are essential for effective communication in different contexts. The MIL AECs can help students develop proficiency in their native languages, which is crucial for maintaining cultural diversity and promoting inclusivity in the country. Similarly, the English language AECs can help students develop proficiency in English, which is increasingly important for success in today's globalized world. The focus on communication skills in both MIL and English language AECs can help students develop interpersonal, intercultural, and digital communication skills that are essential for professional and personal success. However, the successful implementation of these AECs requires careful planning, effective curriculum design, and continuous evaluation and feedback. Overall, the MIL and English language focused AECs can contribute significantly to the development of students' language and communication skills, which are critical for their academic, personal, and professional growth.

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