



ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE TEACHERS TOWARDS SEMESTER SYSTEM AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS:

*Semester, undergraduate ,
college, attitude , education*

Introduction of semester system is a part of academic reformations initiated by University Grants Commission in the recent years. At present most of the universities of India have introduced semester system at both post graduate and undergraduate level courses. The effectiveness in the implementation of semester system will depend on the attitude and motivation of the teachers and also students. The present paper is an attempt to understand the attitude of the college teachers towards semester system. The study was confined to only colleges affiliated to Gauhati University. College teachers were selected on the basis of stratified sampling method. The investigator studied the attitude of male & female teachers, rural and urban teachers and also arts, science and commerce teachers.

INTRODUCTION

There have been lot of reformations in the higher education system in India during the last few years and obviously it is because of the impact of the wave of globalization. University Grants Commission (UGC) in its 11th Plan proposal and strategies has taken a number of new initiatives which involves some steps for reformation in higher education. For speedy and substantive academic and administrative reforms UGC had set up a committee of expert under the leadership of Prof. Gnanam which has also made several important recommendations with regard to academic reforms in universities and college system for enhancement of quality and excellence. Some important reformation as per the recommendations of the committee include – semester system, choice based credit system, curriculum development, admission procedure and examination reform. One of the major reformations that have been taken place in the Indian higher education system is the introduction of semester system.

What is a semester system?

The British reign has given us a higher education system in which students were assessed at the end of each year and for a long time we have been following the system both at the post graduate as well as undergraduate level. However at present there is a demand that all these need to be changed with the change of situation, need, time, aspiration and for the sake of quality enhancement of higher education. In most of the countries now the annual system has been replaced by semester system. A 'semester' (from the Latin meaning "six-monthly") has come to mean either of two academic terms, generally excluding the summer or January terms, if any, and so can be 14 to 20 weeks long. The word 'semester' is sometimes used as a synonym for a 'term', as in a 'summer

semester'. A 'trimester' (from the Latin meaning "three-monthly") divides the academic year into three periods, separated by breaks. In some jurisdictions, "trimester" is used in its original meaning to indicate a quarter system (since three months is exactly a quarter of a year), or a variation of it. A 'quarter' or 'quadrimester' system treats the summer term on an equal footing with the other terms. It divides the academic year into four quarters, each of which is usually 12 weeks long. Well semester system has been a consistent source of blessing for the trinity of higher education i.e. teaching, learning and examination. According to the Dictionary of Education edited by Carter V. Good semester means half of the academic year usually 16 to 18 weeks. It is thus clear that the semester signifies the division of the academic year into two parts, just as the trimester implies the division of the academic year into three parts. It is clear that the semester system which in the strict terminological sense, merely implies the division of the academic year into two parts. It has come to be associated with the credit system, grade system and internal assessment. It is often thought that the semester can neither be effective nor successful, if it is introduced without its commitment parts. Each university should decide for itself the pattern of the semester system.

Implementation of semester system in Assam

Although semester system has already been existed in the professional and technical courses in India and also introduced in the post graduate courses of different universities, but recently University Grants Commission has directed all the Indian Universities to introduce semester system in their undergraduate courses; consequently there have been debate and discussion among the academicians on the issue. In spite of the opposition from some academicians semester system

is already in operation in many Indian universities. Even UGC has reportedly threatened the universities to stop the release of development grants in the event of non-implementation of the semester system. The UGC chairmen letter to all the Vice chancellors of the Indian universities dated March 2009 mentioned, "I may mention that the new grant making policy developed by UGC as part of the 11th Plan strategy for improving the quality of higher education involved linking of grant making process with adoption of academic and administrative reforms by the concerned universities and colleges. Therefore educational institutions are expected to initiate their academic reform at the earliest." According to the UGC Action plan the implementation of semester system may be completed within two calendar years in all the central universities and within three years in all the state universities. Now the Gauhati University and Dibrugarh University have also implemented semester system at undergraduate level courses from the academic session 2011-12.

SELECTION OF THE PRESENT PROBLEM

As the semester system has already been introduced by Gauhati University at the undergraduate level and there has been mix reaction on the part of the teaching community. While some are appreciating the system against of which many are criticizing the system. However without full cooperation of the teaching community it is not possible to implement the system effectively. Therefore it is necessary to have positive attitude towards semester system. Considering this fact the researcher has selected this problem to know the attitude of undergraduate college teachers towards semester system. The problem has been stated as Attitude of college teachers towards semester system at undergraduate level.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study has been undertaken with the following objective:

- (1) To know the attitude of college teachers towards semester system.
- (2) To study the rural and urban college teachers towards semester system
- (3) To study the male and female college teachers towards semester system
- (4) To study the attitude of arts, science and commerce stream college teachers towards semester system.

NULL HYPOTHESES

Ho1: There is no significant difference between rural and urban college teachers towards semester system

Ho2: There is no significant difference between male and female college teachers towards semester system

Ho3: There is no significant difference among the college teachers of arts, science and commerce teachers

METHODS OF STUDY

The study was conducted under the Descriptive survey method. This method is very common in social science and educational research. It is an attempt to analyze, interpret and report the existing status of a group. As the present study is an attempt to reveal the existing status of college teachers so far their attitude towards semester system at undergraduate level is concerned therefore Descriptive survey method is considered most suitable method.

Population and Sample design

The population of the study consists of all the college teachers working in the colleges affiliated to Gauhati University. As it not practicable to study the whole population as such the investigator has selected sample from the population on the basis of stratified random sampling technique. Total 150 college teachers were selected as sample for the study. Detail of the sample is described in the following table-

Table-1 Sample distribution

Gender	Arts stream	Science stream	Commerce stream	Total
Male	30	27	18	75
Female	28	31	16	75
Total	58	58	34	150
Location	Arts stream	Science stream	Commerce stream	Total
Rural	24	31	11	66
Urban	34	27	23	84
Total	58	58	34	150

As seen from the above table that of the total 150 sample of college teachers 75 are male 75 are female, again 66 of the sample belongs to rural areas and 84 are from urban area colleges. Sample were also stratified into arts, science and commerce stream. Of the total sample 58 are from arts stream, 58 from science stream and 34 are from commerce stream.

Tools of Data collection

For collection of primary data from the sample a self structure questionnaire was administered to the selected sample from college teachers. The questionnaire is close ended and contains total 15 items related to the objectives of the study apart from the preliminary information. The questionnaire was constructed in the five point Likert's Method. Responses were (i) Strongly agree (ii) Agree (iii) Undecided (iv) Disagree (v) Strongly disagree. Weightage 5 was given for strongly agree and 1 was given for strongly disagree responses. The highest possible score was 75 (15x5=75). To assure the content validity of the questionnaire

suggestions were taken from three experts in this field. Accordingly questionnaire was modified. Reliability of the questionnaire was calculated on split half method. The reliability value is found 0.78.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Objective-1

The first objective of the study was to find out the attitude level of college teachers towards semester system at undergraduate level. Level of attitude has been calculated on the basis of frequency and the range of mean score of the respondent. Level of attitude was categorized under five levels i.e Highly positive (mean score range 60 and above), Positive (mean score range 45 to 59), Moderately positive (mean score range 30 to 44), negative attitude (mean core range 15 to 29) and highly negative attitude (mean score range 0 to 14). The findings of the analysis is presented in the table-2

Table-2 Level of Attitude of the College teachers

Level of Attitude	Mean score range	Absolute number	Percentage
Highly positive attitude	60 and above	45	30%
Positive attitude	45 to 59	68	45.34%
Moderately positive attitude	30 to 44	34	22.67%
Negative attitude	15 to 29	3	2%
Highly negative attitude	0 to 14	0	0%

The above table reveals that a considerable number of respondent have highly positive attitude towards semester system at undergraduate level which is 30 percent of the total 150 respondent. However the highest number of respondent i.e. 45.34 percent have positive attitude followed by 22.67 percent have moderately positive attitude. Only 2 percent of the respondent have negative attitude and 0 percent have highly negative attitude towards semester system at undergraduate level.

Objective-2

The second objective of the study was to study the male and female college teachers towards semester system at undergraduate. To study this objective structured questionnaire was administered to 75 male teachers and 75 female teachers. Our hypothesis was no significant difference between male and female college teachers in their attitude towards semester system. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed through Mean and 't' test. Result is shown in the following table-3.

Table-3 Gender wise difference in the attitude

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	t
Male	75	62.69	12.54	1.44	.335
Female	75	61.96	14.21	1.64	

From the above table it is revealed that the Mean score obtained by Male teacher is 62.69 and that is in case of Female teacher is 61.96 with a negligible mean difference of 0.73 only. The SD value of Male mean score is 12.54 and that of female is 14.21. However to know the real difference between male and female mean score 't' test was calculated. The calculated 't' value .335 is not significant at any level. As such we may retain the null hypothesis of no difference. We may conclude that there is no significant difference between male teachers and female teachers in their attitude towards semester system at undergraduate level.

Objective-3

The third objective of the study was to study the Rural and Urban college teachers towards semester system at undergraduate. To study this objective structured questionnaire was administered to 64 Rural teachers and 84 Urban teachers. Our hypothesis was no significant difference between Rural and Urban college teachers in their attitude towards semester system. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed through Mean and 't' test. Result is shown in the following table-4

Table-4 Location wise difference in the attitude

Location	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	T
Rural	64	57.96	15.14	1.86	3.68
Urban	84	65.75	10.68	1.16	

From the table-4 it is found that the mean score obtained by rural college teachers is 57.96 against the Urban college teachers mean score of 66.75 with a mean difference of 7.79 which is considerable. The SD value is also 15.14 and 10.68 for rural and urban college teachers respectively. However to know the real difference between rural and urban college teachers in their attitude towards semester system 't' test was applied between the two mean score. The calculated 't' value is found 3.68 which is highly significant at 5 percent level of significant and also at 1 percent level of significance. As such we may reject our null hypothesis of no difference. It indicates that there is statistical difference between rural and urban college teachers so far their attitude towards

semester system is concerned. The higher mean score obtained by urban college teachers is the indicator of higher positive attitude towards semester system.

Objective-4

Fourthly, the investigator also wanted to study the attitude of college teachers of different streams i.e. Arts, Science and Commerce towards semester system at undergraduate level. After analysis of the responses of 58 Arts stream teachers, 58 science stream teachers and 34 commerce stream teachers the investigator has calculated the mean score of these three groups of teachers obtained in the questionnaire. The result is shown in the following table No-5

Table-5 Stream wise difference in the attitude

Stream	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	F
Arts	58	61.91	13.61	1.78	.132
Science	58	62.13	14.14	1.85	
Commerce	34	63.35	11.79	2.02	
Total	150	62.32	13.36	1.09	

As found in the table-3 that the mean score obtained by Arts teachers is 58, science teacher is 58 and the Commerce teacher obtained 34 mean score. The SD value is 13.61, 14.14 and 11.79 for arts, science and commerce respectively.

However to know the significant difference between arts, science and commerce teachers the investigator applied ANOVA or 'F' test. The F value is found .132 which not at all significant at any level of significant. As such we may retain

the null hypothesis of no difference and we can conclude that there is no statistically significant difference between of arts, science and commerce college teachers in their attitude towards semester system. The minor difference between these three groups is negligible.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- (1) Majority of the college teachers have positive attitude towards semester system at undergraduate level, as 45.43 percentage of the teachers rpondents have positive attitude followed by 30 percent highly positive.
- (2) There is no significant difference between male and female college teachers towards semester system
- (3) There is significant difference between rural and urban college teachers in their attitude towards semester system. The higher mean score obtained by urban college teachers indicates higher positive attitude.
- (4) There is no significant difference between arts, science and commerce stream college teachers in their attitude towards semester system.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The forgoing discussion has revealed that most of the college teachers have favourable attitude towards semester system at undergraduate level although few teaches donot have favourable attitude. Semester system has already been implemented in the universities of Assam at both post graduate as well as undergraduate levels. There may be certain problems and shortcomings, but the concerned universities should take appropriate mechanism to effectively implement the system. Despite the semester system having certain shortcomings, but it may proved to be a better system is carefully planned, if we have positive attitude and strong motivation to work.

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