

Relevance of Semester System in Higher Education

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Abstract:- Semester system is a world-widely accepted system of education and the current trend in higher education system. The main advantage of this system is that it provides an opportunity to students for continuous learning, assessment and deep understanding of the subjects and greater involvement of the teachers and the students. This system forces the students to study consistently, to work hard, to manage the time and to prepare one self. But semester system has both advantages as well as disadvantages. This system can only succeed if it is implemented in its entirety with strong management and financial support. To run this system in well manner whole education system should be supported by strict rules and regulations. There should be a well designed curriculum, clear rules, motivated teachers, honest and motivated administrative staff etc.

Keywords:- Semester System, Advantages, Disadvantages, Strict Discipline, Motivated Teachers, Good Administration

I. INTRODUCTION

For many years, there hadn't been observed any novel system in the educational sector of India and Assam during the post-independence education or Human Resource Development field though different Reformation and Survey Committees had been set up to estimate the running system, need of the time and the necessary step to be taken for bright future of India which comprised the Mudaliar Commission, Kothary Commission etc. It is an encouraging matter to observe that in the recent past a great change of the education system and some remarkable modification has been done in case of course-content and the period of time allotted to the particular course which reflects some goodwill and presumed future prospect for the students of Higher Educational Courses that will help in the nation building operation. The sequence of courses and the period of stipulated time will obviously work in the long run to bring down the projected goal of objective teaching, swift completion of course in the Higher Education institutes and there would be no need to direct anyone-the students and teacher, to get involved in the course of study. The semester system as has been introduced in Higher Education System has done the expected job with maximum involvement, penetrating into the subject, economy of time, development of evaluation system and destined higher personality in case of the students.

But matter of dispute and controversy is that whether this system would work or not. The main objectives are that the Semester System will fail to evaluate the students properly, marking system will create some problems, time-bound factor will lead the latter to a leap in pertaining the classes, proper infrastructure will fall short, maintenance of staff-pattern will suffer a lot etc.

These problems are present in the traditional systems also which fail to reflect the quality of the students and teachers with an inability to cope with the latest technology applied or attempted to be applied in education system. But, it is of paramount importance to note that the present atmosphere of science and technology with divergent discoveries which leads an educational aspirant to the vast realm of knowledge, necessitates the novel system like Semester. Obvious again is the fact that no policy or system is there in the field of enquiry which can satisfy all the aspects involved in gathering knowledge and information.

So, semester system as has been introduced in Higher Education, should be a proper strategy to make all attempts fruitful with the destined outcomes mainly in preparing human ideology and personality to build up the nation. In this regard, it is customary to uphold the views and opinions from which the objectivity and factuality of this system can be justified as because; every aspect depends upon the nature and mode of enquiry into the subject, that is clear from the point that the more it is magnified, the higher will be the result.

The justification therefore would be based on the workability and relevance of Semester System which has many a time and many a place been discussed from maximum points of view of veteran scholars.

II. DICHOTOMY OF SEMESTER AND ANNUAL SYSTEM

Actually both the systems aim at the proper findings of intellectual development to cope with the future prospects. But both of them have advantages as well as disadvantages. With regard to the semester system, it can be observed that-

- The course is divided into various parts for which examinations are held.

- It is limited course oriented scheme.
- It helps the teachers to test students better on the subjects.
- The students need not look back to the contents once he or she passes that course.
- It is easier for the students also to prepare for the examination.
- The autonomy of the institutes, that part of the course is asked which is covered in the classes and the rest is left aside, neither the teachers nor the students pay attention to the other parts. It will, no doubt, lower the grade of the students.
- Regarding evaluation of the answers, there is autonomy of the professors which gives vent to the setting of papers, checking of the answer-scripts and the same gives the opportunity to the teachers in showing some favour and this can degrade the quality of the entire system and the factors involved in the system.
- In this system, the annual examination is divided in to two parts with six month's span of time, in addition to which the sessional and unit tests are there. The teachers and students take it as an extra burden.
- There is a change of curriculum in the Higher Education System which includes technological courses that the students can understand the retrospective data from other countries. In this case, none but semester system can serve the best. Though the introduction of this system is opposed by many scholars and teacher, yet the need and workability of such system unavoidable. But still, there are a lot of drawbacks of this system as-

- Semester System blocks the long term memory. The students develop a tendency of forgetting and not carrying the knowledge gained in the former semester.
- Many long term experiments that used to be carried out in the annual system, had to be taken out of syllabus due to introduction of this system because this system prevents the students in getting involved in indulging in obtaining data and in analyzing them.
- Under this system, the students do not have the interest to work in the laboratory more than the stipulated time.
- This system affects the writing ability of the students for the type of the questions.
- The project work and the evaluation of the same makes itself less valuable and superficial which is done only for name sake

Yet, there has been a strong approach to the inclusion of this system for the advantages it has and this system reflects more than the Traditional Annual System. So, Semester System is relevant in the present time which also include variety of course content.

III. ADVANTAGES AND RELEVANCE

- Observations are not rare that this system paves the way for penetrating into the subjects to the maximum depth. Boun This can be proved and supported by considering the facts of the span of time for study, absorption of course materials, preparation, evaluation, out-of-class assignment, more text books, more faculty-students interaction etc. This system, through greater depth of coverage of content and ideas allow the students keep on clinging to the subject.
- No other system is as convenient as semester system is and the concepts behind this system like friendly users, attractive elimination of one calendar unit of the complete calendar, one less set of classes, less tuition and fees payment.
- From the part of the students, it is a less work load than the annual system. The students have been observed to involve themselves in study or in any work related to the course. The provisions of new curriculum, has made this approach easy and convenient which is more productive educational techniques.
- Semester system creates the situation for improvement of retention of students because of faculty-interaction with the students. The gap of time between new classes and the examination in the annual system leaves behind a gap in the minds of the students and teachers which is reduced in this system. The gap between the teachers and students or between students and the new course materials affects the students in obtaining knowledge through realization, introspection, adherence etc.
- It is not only in Georgian Colleges and Universities but in the institutions of the world that renewal, reshaping, refocus of educational programmes would be reflected through semester system. It is not an attempt of the conventions that took place in the nineties of the 20th century but in the decade that followed lays stress on this system.

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING OBSERVATION:

The above sited aspects of semester system makes a straight and easy drill in to the education system which has been introduced in most of the developed countries where the practical aspect of education and educational research have been of top priority. This system is extremely beneficial for the students who really absorbed in attaining knowledge to prepare himself for the impending future. It can be considered as a sign or destination towards which we are marching.

But specific location and need based policies are to be adjusted with this system to get the based result from this operation. The fact of its workability can be traced from the following which represent the relevance of the system in our educational system.

- The method used in teaching and learning is scientific.
- The syllabus for it breaks up into units where the time and content can be adjusted and the same is supported by the present ideology of man.
- The testing and evaluation system is so much an operation of continuity that this makes the students more realistic in assessment of their academic capabilities.
- The process of learning is also methodological enough to get the better of the system with fruitful result.
- There is a vast scope above taking down notes of self-study, visiting the library, browsing the net and preparing for semester, project and research works. This is what we seek from the education demeanor of the students which will inculcate on the line of the greatest personality development.
- The final and the most influencing aspect of Semester System is its time-bound factor which leaves no chance in the part of the students to waste time. It compels the students and teachers to study consistently, work hard, acquire self-dependence, maintain the time and destine at the highest realization.

V. CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

With regard to the concepts of Annual system and Quarterly System along with the monthly testing system, it is clearly observed that despite some negligible advantages in academic and formal sectors, Semester system influences and affects the relevant extra and supra-academic treatment of the approach which a society never expects from the institutes or the centers of the community. No doubt, a school or a college is a community centre for all-round development of the whole community. It is none but a sacred institute to develop the sociability, sense of brotherhood, integrity, globalization, human health and affection with a proper platform for humanity. Educational systems should pave the way for growth of humanistic sense by which man can adjust himself in the changed and developed situations where the scientific discoveries and scientific thoughts glorify the complete human race. From the original point of view education is a mean to reach the apex points of all developments or to culminate in all sectors. Education aims at making good citizens.

But in response to these all, the semester system is under criticism-

- This system limits the works of teachers by the laden work responsibility if the extra educational works are to be fulfilled.
- It leads the students to a life of book worms which is dangerous for a social life. For example-some genius personalities are found to be the worst orator, unsocial, pedantic and introvert from whom society can never expect anything. They are rarely social workers.
- A big question always chases this system-if this system produces some mechanical agent or machine like human

beings who are well-versed in his own field but dull in social involvement or benevolent works with aesthetic guideline? Here, the positive nods are inclined.

- The compact syllabi draw the attention of the serious section that the themes and topics are fractioned for each of the semesters where one topic is designed for one semester.
- Another important issue is that the teachers do not get sufficient time to cover the course due mainly to the Assessment procedure.
- The most important thing which is a mark of dogmatic as well as shallow thinking that the topics are included in the syllabus without sufficient Textbook. For this, the students have to suffer a lot.
- Again, the objectives lecturing or effective classroom, teaching, data-based lecture, world wide-referring concepts and the skill and competitiveness are also a burning questions of the present era.

Let us turn the page for a good teacher rich in information, latest discovery and criticism oriented teacher, properly engaged in study, unselfish, well-versed in subjective knowledge, morally sound and dutiful, punctual, and social teacher. The problem is that the selection system of a teacher is not adequate for-(i) The frequent change of Selection procedure, (ii) Overlooking of teaching ability test resulting in possibility of deaf and dumb or blind teacher's selection having good academic background for while an immoral, unsocial, inefficient and disguised candidate can be selected who never tries to absorb in this scared human service. But the most important things are left aside like-eloquence, readiness, body language, sweetness and physical attraction, leadership quality etc. for which the student's career becomes a minor case. The basic need is thrown into darkness. Yet every phenomenon has a relevant cause, but still, this is to be noted that good eloquent teachers with wider outlook, are disregarded.

It is also observed that the departmental heads are also not beyond that limitation. A good instance can be listed here. The authority, on whose responsibility is the development and research along with good and sound knowledge of the students are entrusted, are not well-informed. Most of the teachers don't know what a textbook means or what a Guidebook or suggestion means. They are so reserved that for them, the books recommend by the council are only Textbooks. It is a shameful matter that the author himself came to face as witness. It is possible only for the Semester System, Objectives type question pattern, Mark sheet oriented professor Selection System, Domination of Pressure Group etc. The notable thing is that eloquence, effective classroom teaching and the sociable behavior are the most important things in Higher Education so far as the question of Objective teachings is concerned. And the vicious authority plays the vital role in this regard by keeping a soft corner for reservation for different groups to meet their selfish and biased motive. But the real solution is that in

some places like education, health services and that of security matters there should not be any kind of reservation or compromise with lower grade of efficiency. Efficiency should be the top priority. This is matter to be discussed widely and justified on the basis of the need of the time.

It is also observed that in most of the colleges, there are shortage of staff with the same load of students and course as well. The most shameful matter is that in the same college the permanently appointed teachers are paid with high salary and the temporarily adjusted teachers are paid less than a labour against their classes numbering same with the former. Again, the authority fails at every step to create the sense of duty performance and effective teaching. There is no proper system of evaluation of teaching by the professors in the classroom. Lack of actual feedback, undue advantage with contractual teacher, lack of academic inclination and new research can destroy the glory of the former teachers and Gurus. Professorship, teaching and learning service are not only a livelihood, a gentleman's service in disguise but a sacred profession to serve the society for making a good platform for next generation and the bright future of the country.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be stressed that at present semester system can not be a choice; it is a need for us. Any major change in the academic system will almost certainly give rise to some unforeseen problems in the initial phase. The solutions will come when the problems will be discussed openly and frankly. Thus there is a need for continuous reviews and analysis of these rules to make them current and to provide a mechanism for continuous improvement in the semester system. If the talented teaching community concentrates on the implementation of best practices and the optimization of processes, we may catalyze a change which would influence positively the mindsets of new generation. The faculty and students should be prepared for this change through a series of meeting, lectures and training programs.

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