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RELEVANCE OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM OF EVALUATION IN INDIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

Educational system all over the world is continuously changing. New concepts of education are being devised and put forward in each and every corner of the globe. The stakeholders are exposed to these novel concepts and new possibilities are welcomed to teach tests in all the possible ways. There are uncounted suggestions for reforms and changes in educational system and there are infinite number of good ideas and research results. Semester system can be said to be the product of these investigations. A semester system is an academic term. A semester system is an academic term, rather it may be termed as division of an academic year. Not only in colleges, it can similarly be applied in schools and universities. When an academic year is divided in two parts, it is called a semester. In the academic circle trimester or quarter semester may also be adopted. Literally, semester means six-month period. This semester system was first introduced in the undergraduate curriculum from 2009 admission on words in the affiliated colleges of a university. One may consider it as a continuation of previous days spent in schools. In the schools, the students and teachers are used to work and study almost the whole year with two or three major breaks as vacations in the bi-yearly or tri-yearly examinations. The prime area of objections regarding these private institutions is the fact that questions can always be raised about the quality of teaching and also the teaching techniques and expertise of the teachers. So, all said and done, there has to be some serious thinking on the matter of providing quality education in a decent manner and at a decent rate.

Keywords: Semester System, Evaluation, Tri-yearly.

Introduction

Continuous research and exploration lead to the introduction of semester system. The word "semester" takes its root from a Latin word meaning "Six Monthly". "Semester" refers to any one of the two academic terms, generally excluding the summer or January terms. The word "semester" is sometimes used as a synonym for a "term", as in a "summer semester" It is division of an academic year, the time during which a college holds classes. 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.

In India this six-month system is generally followed. Generally, the academic year in a school is marked by two, oftentimes three, major examinations that are held in and around the vacations. It is not new when it comes to central universities in India because these universities have long been following this pattern. Many countries in the world today are adopting the semester system so as to have a fair share of intellectual mastery in the global educational scenario.

History of Semester System in Evaluation

Semester systems are that the government's concern with privatization of education system. It means that education has been passed on to the private sector. Apparently, privatization of education seems to be a good option as the Govt. has been far from adopting a decent and stable education system in our country. The infrastructure needs to be revamped. But privatization is not really a solution to the problem that continues to plague India even 64 years after independence that is poor educational standards in the country. The major objections raised against privatization in education revolve around the question of quality education and expertise of teachers of such institutions.

So, there has to be some serious thinking on the matter of providing quality education in a decent manner and at a decent rate.

As in the state of Assam, the introduction of semester system stunned a many. The stockholders of education – teacher, students and the guardians were at first reluctant or hesitant at the implementation of semester system.

Importance and objective of the semester system in Evaluation

The objectives of semester system may be summed up in the following way:

- To broaden the outlook of the students and instill in them a sense of confidence and responsibility.
- The student gets more chances to remain well versed.



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- Unit tests act as model tests for the final examination.
- A detailed account of the student's progress graph can be produced in semester system.
- To acquaint the students with different forms, styles and thoughts in other parts of the country and beyond.
- The semester system allows greater interaction with teachers and the students will be more focused on preparing throughout the year.
- It is also part of the current trend in education system in other parts of the country and beyond.

Essential Features of the Semester System in Evaluation

- In the traditional system, the whole educative process is aimed at fulfilling the requirements of examination and completing course. The system provides for introduction of greater flexibility in the curriculum and students have variety of courses open to them. This makes their knowledge base strong and it, in turn, provides flexibility in making choices when it comes to the questions of future educational and vocational choices
- The teaching-learning process is constantly monitored by teachers through tests, assignments, classroom discussion and personal interaction with the students.
- The concept of credit hours is more good thing to engage students in learning. We don't allow a candidate to appear in an examination unless he/she completes certain percentage of class attendance.
- The performance of the students is assessed not only in term of achievement scores obtained in test, but also in terms of effort put in as measured by the credit hour.

The Implementation of Semester System in Evaluation

- Carrying out the teaching work more regularly and comprehensively by using interdisciplinary approach mutual corporation and new instructional strategies.
- Making the syllabus more broad-based with main subjects including core and elective subjects.
- Providing greater variety of subject area to suit the intellectual, motivational requirements of the students.
- Reducing unnecessary stress and strain before and during teaching and examination period and making learning purposeful, pleasant and joyful activity.
- Making teaching-learning more broad-based by including class discussion, tutorials, assignments and library work.
- Including a system that can receive continuous feedback for improvement of learning experience so as to make them more effective.

Advantages of Semester System in Evaluation

There are many merits of this semester system. They may be as follows-

- It is good for the student community. As these students are the futures of society.
- It creates awareness of the parallel streams prevalent in various parts of the country.
- It keeps the students in touch with the books the whole year. It can prove beneficial for the students.
- The compulsion of tests in between has made the students presence in the colleges all throughout the year. Modern times offer many distractions for youth and there is every possibility of their being spoiled. Therefore, keeping them busy is a must. Tests and examinations keep them engaged and this engagement is beneficial both for their professional and personal life.
- The students will be constantly evaluated and the depth and breadth of their knowledge will improve.
- It allows greater interaction with teachers and the children will be more focused on preparing throughout the year.
- This will give the students to cooperate in the future with the universities, most of who run in the semester system. Introduction of semester system in colleges ensures continuity in imparting education. Students are engrossed in teaching-learning process through examination system.
- For some students, it will be better as there will be fewer courses as compared to annual.
- The semester system allows the students no luxury of studying at the last moment and still getting good marks in the final exams. This semester system makes one much alert. The engagement prevents them from bunking classes and makes the classes a serious affair. This encourages students not to take refuge in last minute suggestions and makes them more involved.
- In the semester system a section, rather small, of the syllabus is focused and students are tested on that section only. Such a student fares much better in the final examination where the whole curriculum is assessed. As a student learns by heart the problem areas through sectional preparation in the semester system, he/she has a considerable edge in improving his result in final assessment.



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When students go to undergraduate colleges after school, they are compelled to revert back to annual system. The semester system will come as a welcome relief for such students.

Disadvantages of Semester System in Evaluation

- Students have to manage the syllabus in short time.
- Sometimes, teachers cannot convey the whole knowledge of the subject due to short time.
- Students do not get time for extra study; as a result, they just have basic knowledge of the subject.
- In semesters system, students do not get chance to re-evaluate their papers, so they have to manage and maintain their grades.
- There is less time for research, students do not get enough opportunity to research.
- Time passes very quickly and it does not let students to have complete knowledge about the subject.

Conclusion

These are the few advantages and disadvantages of semester system. Considering the meticulous details of both semester and annual system, it may seem difficult to choose a single system over the other. But, if we review student's choice, most of them prefer semester system over annual system because in that system, the students get more advantage; since examinations are held within a very short time span and their memory of what has been taught remains afresh to a great extent.

The syllabus load also will be less. The variety of topics, as a result, will be minimized and the paper will be less burdensome. Students get more chances to improve also. In the semester system the proximity of consecutive tests or examinations keeps the students busy through the months and resultantly it minimizes the changes of student unrest.

There were many challenges to be faced by the under graduate colleges in preparing the students for the semester system. Both the teachers and the students get involved in this semester system of education all through the year. It can best be called a proactive system. But in the annual system students feel involved only during the examination period and the preceding months are marked with abundant freedom leading them to be involved in many non-academic pursuits. As semester system stands on truncated sort of syllabus, it reduces examination burden also. Therefore, it may decisively be said that Semester system is here to stay.

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