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Students' Perspective on the Semester System at Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan

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This study investigates student perceptions of the semester system's deployment in Pakistani higher education institutions in the context of worldwide transformative shifts. The study examines the transition from the conventional annual system, focusing on key issues such as students' first perceptions, the semester system's impact on academic workload, time management, learning, assessment procedures, engagement, and involvement. It investigates feedback mechanisms and communication channels to get insights into the effectiveness of student-instructor interactions. The study evaluates overall student happiness and the semester system's possible impact on well-being, recognizing both positive characteristics that contribute to a positive academic experience and potential issues that harm mental health. Five selective universities conducted a survey using a questionnaire. The four-point Likert scale questionnaire "strongly disagree to strongly agree" was used to collect the ordinal data. Using simple random sampling, four hundred student samples were collected from five selective universities. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the frequency, percentage, and median as the average for ordinal data. Furthermore, the Kruskal Wallis H Test assessed variations in more than two groups' opinions based on five university levels, and the Mann– Whitney U test investigated inequalities in the views of two groups of male and female students. The results offer valuable insights to educational policymakers, administrators, and educators. These insights will provide a student-focused understanding of the consequences of implementing the semester system.

1. Introduction

Higher education is the highest level of the formal education system and plays a significant role in formalizing, organizing, and developing knowledge through theoretical frameworks. Universities disseminate knowledge and translate it into practical applications by cultivating highly competent, proficient, and forward-thinking individuals capable of functioning effectively within the contemporary societal framework. Universities are characterized by the regulation and transformation of their systems (Corradini, 2022). Pakistani universities have been implementing and incorporating innovative instructional methodologies to replace outdated techniques. The former yearly system is being gradually substituted with the semester system, which was recently implemented approximately fifteen years ago (Sardar et al., 2019). The annual system, as defined by higher education programs, designates an academic year as a single term and emphasizes yearly testing systems. On the other hand, the semester system, employed in higher education, divides the academic year into two terms, reduces the number of credit hours, and incorporates continuous assessment (Willems, 2020).

Upon comparing the yearly system with the semester system, it becomes apparent that the semester system exhibits notable distinctions in its philosophy, organization, and execution strategy. The semester system grants instructors greater independence and adaptability in making decisions on pedagogical activities, encompassing curriculum design and student performance evaluation (Supriyanto, 2018). Before 2008, the prevailing education system in Pakistan's educational institutions followed an annual ideology wherein the teaching period spanned one year. The end-of-year exam encompassed the complete curriculum taught throughout the year, as shown in the design of the question papers. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) implemented the semester system in higher education because it is a contemporary approach that facilitates teaching activities with greater efficiency compared to the traditional yearly system. Furthermore, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) aimed to ensure that Pakistan's education system is comparable to that of other advanced nations (Nadeem, 2023).

Transitioning to a completely different system is a challenging endeavor due to the unique philosophical framework that each system operates within. This necessitates modifying the behaviors of the individuals responsible for building and operating the new system. Alternatively, individuals create these modifications based on their pre-established mindset. Consequently, the introduction of the system may lead to a loss of its originality. The present research focuses on analyzing the degree to which higher education institutions that utilize the semester system adhere to the principles and objectives of the semester system (Shoukat et al., 2021).

The semester system in Pakistani higher educational institutions differs significantly from the annual system regarding its origin, philosophy, and application structure. It is a very highly disciplined and expensive system of examination it needs more financial support to run the higher institutions (Shamuratov, 2021). The semester system is an educational system that prioritizes learning over teaching. The focus of this system is solely on the learner, rather than the teacher. The semester system is designed to prioritize

ongoing, intensive learning to improve students' capacities by fostering the necessary information, skills, and attitudes (Kim & Hong, 2021). Many higher education institutions in Western Europe and North America have embraced the semester system, which was initially a model from the United States. This system is distinguished by increased autonomy for instructors and institutions.

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) constantly enhances and raises the country's educational standards. The HEC has acknowledged the deficiencies of the current education system in promoting student awareness and academic achievements. As a result, they have implemented measures to overhaul the educational structure completely. The HEC saw that the current education system did not satisfy the intended requirements for student academic performance. As a result, they recommended a complete redesign and the adoption of a standardized international evaluation system. However, the transition from the annual to the semester system in Pakistan's higher education institutions, such as universities or colleges, varies significantly. This transformation is contingent upon each university's infrastructure and their expert committees' recommendations (Nayar, 2024). The Pakistan National Qualification Framework (NQF) defines the level of competency and the impact on learning regarding the knowledge, abilities, and skills graduates possess. This allows students, employers, and human resource development professionals to comprehend the capabilities of individuals quickly. The NQF document aims to establish a clear and comprehensive competency framework by utilizing the semester system and allocating credit hours to each course (Vieten et al., 2024). The research problem aims to examine and understand the features and structure of the semester system in Pakistani higher education institutions, specifically in the context of shifting from the traditional annual system. This problem statement serves as a foundation for doing research or analysis to improve the education system in Pakistan.

The current trend in the education system that is recognized all over the world is the higher education system for students. One of the most significant advantages of this approach is that it encourages students to continue their education by reviewing and enhancing their grasp of the topics they are studying. Additionally, it maintains the interest of both teachers and students (Evans & Waring, 2020). Learning is the primary focus of the semester system, which is an educational system that emphasizes learning above teaching. This approach places the learner at the center of the process rather than the instructor as the primary focus. The semester system is designed to emphasize ongoing, in-depth, and compressive learning to develop students' capabilities by promoting the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Mahartini, 2023). The findings of this study may be beneficial in resolving issues that have arisen among students as a result of the semester system. Additionally, it may assist in determining the type and structure of the semester system and its influence on the teaching-learning environment at Pakistan's higher educational institutions.

1.1 Objective of the Study

The present research intends:

- To find out the impact of the semester system on the teaching-learning environment at higher education institutions in Pakistan

1.2 Research Question

- What is the impact of the semester system on the teaching-learning environment at higher education institutions in Pakistan?

2. Literature Review

This study discovers different features linked to the semester systems, teaching learning environment, and higher education institutions in Pakistan. It exactly observes how the semester system affects the teaching and learning environment in higher education institutions in Pakistan. Several advantages are transmitted through the semester system, including consistent evaluation, an excellent range of accessible courses, and successful students' educational knowledge. The purpose of this study is to obtain a more in-depth grasp of the factors that influence educational practices and outcomes in an environment that is constantly evolving through the investigation of existing literature and data that has been seen. This investigation aims to locate the literature study on the transition from the annual system to the semester system and the consequences this change has had on the teaching and learning environment in Pakistani higher education institutions (Shoukat et al., 2021).

Teaching is commonly understood as a combination of artistic and scientific elements. Artistic teaching prioritizes the teacher's creative and imaginative abilities, aiming to create a relevant classroom atmosphere that promotes student learning. In the realm of science, the focus switches towards clearly defining the logical, mechanical, or procedural procedures that are necessary for efficiently achieving educational objectives. Educationists hold diverse opinions on the concept of teaching (Buzzelli et al., 2020). The teaching technique is observed to have a beneficial effect on student learning. The system enables the ability to modify, enhance, and create new teaching-learning activities, while also embracing intrinsic flexibility. The learner's terminal behavior, as determined by learning structures, can be achieved by creating suitable teaching environments. Teaching as a type of problem-solving and decision-making, similar to the work of doctors, has prompted studies that investigate teachers' decision-making processes. These studies examine the information teachers use to make decisions and how they customize instruction to meet the specific needs of each student (Singer, 2024).

The global teaching-learning environment is continuously changing due to technological improvements, cultural variety, and educational philosophies. Given the extensive accessibility of digital resources and online learning platforms, instructors are actively seeking innovative methods to captivate students and tailor their learning encounters. With the increasing interconnectedness of the world, educators are integrating global viewpoints into their instruction to equip students for a society that is becoming more internationalized. In general, the educational environment worldwide is adjusting to cater to the requirements of a swiftly evolving and interconnected global society (Rosmalina, 2023).

The ongoing discussion on the suitable education system in Pakistan has been a persistent problem, with multiple education commissions providing insights on the subject. In 1959, a national commission highlighted the crucial importance of the education system as a fundamental component of advancement, connecting it to the enhancement of societal norms. Teachers, who have undergone professional training programs, have a vital impact on forming individuals' multifaceted personalities, as their methods of instruction directly influence personal growth (Macdonald, 2021). Moreover, for twenty-first-century learners, critical thinking has been focused on facing the challenges of academics and their whole life. Different studies have been conducted in the Pakistani context to explore critical thinking development in the Pakistani education system, in science and social studies curriculum and teaching practices (Jamil et al., 2023).

The educational environment in higher education institutions is a complex and everchanging system that includes multiple factors that impact students' learning experience. Multiple elements contribute to the formation of this atmosphere, influencing pedagogical methods, student involvement, and overall educational achievements (Sayfullaevich, 2023). Pakistan's educational system is a legacy of the British, featuring two years of concentrated study followed by a test that evaluates both memory and total knowledge. After achieving independence, most universities in Pakistan have adhered to the ideas and practices of an Annual education system. However, a few have switched to the Semester system. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the University of Peshawar and the University of Malakand still offer M.A. English classes using the Annual system. However, Hazara University in Mansehra and Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) offer M.A. English lectures using the Semester system. Gomal University D.I. Khan has chosen to implement the Term system for its M.A. English classes (Khattak et al., 2011).

The Semester system partitions the academic year into two substantial periods, usually 14-16 weeks each. This technique guarantees that the material studied remains current in pupils' memory. The strategy emphasizes learning more than teaching, using a learner-centered approach that prioritizes the development of students' learning capacity instead of following a strict instructional structure. The Semester system entails the individual determination of course material, learning strategies, methodologies, and assessment and evaluation approaches for each specific course. In this system, the teacher assumes the role of a facilitator instead of a conventional instructor (Chaeruman et al., 2020).

3. Research Methodology

The present study employed a quantitative research design. A survey methodology was utilized to gather students' perspectives regarding the semester system and its influence on the teaching-learning environment at a higher educational institution in Pakistan. Five universities were chosen through purposive sampling because, according to the study's objectives, the researchers wanted to describe the nature and format of the semester system. It was not easy to know the entire population of Pakistan's higher education institutions, so the researcher used purposive sampling. Out of the five chosen universities, three were the first to implement the semester system. These universities include Institute of Education & Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, University of Agriculture

Faisalabad, and Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad. The remaining two universities are The Islamia University of Bahawalpur Pakistan (IUB) and Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan (BZU), both of which implemented the semester system in 2008, following the guidance policy of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Because of this, information was gathered from these universities. The name of universities with years when the semester system was started in their departments was collected in the following table.

Table No 1: Five selected Universities with the Starting Year of the Semester System

Sr. No.	Name of Universities	Starting semester system
1	University of the Punjab, Lahore Institute of Education & Research, (IER)	1967
2	University of Agriculture Faisalabad	1968
3	Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad	1971
4	The Islamia University of Bahawalpur	2008
5	Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan	2008

After selecting the five universities the information about the population of the students was collected with references in the given below table.

Table No 2: Population of Students from Five Selected Universities in Pakistan

Public Universities	Students	Source of data
The Islamia University of Bahawalpur	54804	https://www.iub.edu.pk/
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan	26659	https://www.bzu.edu.pk/
University of Agriculture Faisalabad	38325	https://www.uaf.edu.pk/
University of the Punjab, Lahore, Institute of Education & Research, (IER)	49520	https://pu.edu.pk/
Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad	13000	https://qau.edu.pk/
Total	182308	

Since the researcher knew the total number of students and faculty at five designated universities, the Yamane formula was utilized to calculate the optimal sample size for a finite population (Qurashi, & Elhafian, 2023).

$$n = \frac{N}{1+ (N*e^2)}$$

Where, n= sample size N= population

size e = margin of error (0.05) not more

then 5%

With a significance level of 95%

The following steps were used to obtain the sample size.

Sample size for students (182308)

$$\mathbf{n}= \frac{182308}{1+ (182308* 0.05^2)}$$

= 182308/456.77

= 399.124

= 400 possible sample size of students

Table 3: Sampling Distribution of Students and Teachers of Five Universities

Universities	No. of Students	The sample size for students
IUB	54804	54804/182304*400=120
BZU	26659	26659/182308*400=58
UAF	38325	38325/182308*400=84
PU (IER)	49520	49520/182308*400=109
QAU	13000	13000/182308*400=29
Total	182308	400

Note: IUB (The Islamia University of Bahawalpur); BZU; (Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan). UAF; (University of Agriculture Faisalabad). IER PU: University of the Punjab, Lahore Institute of Education & Research, (IER); QAU; Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad

After determining the optimal sample size from the finite population of five universities, stratified random sampling was implemented using probability sampling. This technique utilized strata from the entire population, with each university's stratum comprising the total number of students. Furthermore, the proportion allocation method obtained the sample from each stratum. The stratum sizes within each group were heterogeneous and mutually exclusive (Keskintürk & Er, 2007). After ensuring an adequate sample size, the researcher collected data from five universities using a basic random sampling technique. Using the Yameen formula, 400 students were chosen for the sample and sample size.

Due to the descriptive nature of the investigation, a survey methodology was utilized. The self-developed questionnaire for Students on Semester System (QS) was used for data collection and was a closed-ended questionnaire. It was constructed using a four-point Likert scale with the following response options: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA). The questionnaire was developed keeping in view

the previous literature and experts' perspectives. Before proper data collection, it was pilot tested, and Cronbach alpha value was calculated as 0.93.

4. Data Analysis

There were 400 students in this study. Collected data was analyzed and the results of data are described in the following tables.

4.1 Gender-wise information on male and female students

Table No 4: Frequency and Percentage of Male and Female Students

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	231	57.8
Female	169	42.2
Total	400	100

The above table presents a demographic breakdown based on gender within a sample of 400 students. The "Frequency" column indicates that 231 (57.8%) male and 169 (42.2%) female students were selected. The total sample size is explicitly stated as 400 individuals.

4.2 Mann-Whitney U Test

The Mann-Whitney U test was employed. This nonparametric test was an alternative to the t-test, suitable for ordinal data, and helped determine if there were significant differences in the medians of the two groups, the gender difference between opinions of male and female students and the median scores difference of male and female students about the semester system was calculated, and the following null hypothesis was tested

H0: There is no significant difference between male and female students' opinions about the semester system.

As the data is ordinal hence the null hypothesis was tested using the 'Maan witney U' test about the difference between mean scores of male and female students' opinions about the semester system. The summary is presented in the table.

Table No 5: Gender-Wise Difference between Students' perspectives about Semester System

Gender	N	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	231	45549.50	197.18	18753.500	-1.014	0.311
Female	169	34650.50	205.03			
Total	400					

This column compares male and female groupings in "Gender". In column "N," there are 231 male and 169 female participants, a total of 400. The next column is "Rank sum". This is each group's rank total. It's 45549.50 for men and 34650.50 for women. Next column: Mean Rank Average group rank is 197.18 males and 205.03 females. Next column Mann-Whitney U: 18753.500. Next column, "Z" The Mann-Whitney U test Zscore is -1.014, indicating that the data point value is below average, In the last column, the p-value (Asymp. Sig.) is 0.311, which is high, and when the p-value is more significant than the significance level (usually 0.05),we fail to reject the null hypothesis "Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female ranking about all questionnaire

statements about semester system". This shows that males and female rank are nearly same in all statements of the questionnaire about semester system.

4.3 University-Wise Students' Opinions

Table No 6: University-Wise Number of Students' Perspectives about the Semester System

Universities	Frequency	Percentage
IUB	120	30.0
BZU	58	14.5
UAF	84	21.0
IER PU	109	27.3
QAU	29	7.3
Total	400	100.0

The provided table outlines the distribution of students across different universities within a sample of 400 individuals. For instance, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur has 120 (30.0%) students, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan has 58(14.5%) students, University of Agriculture Faisalabad has 84(21.0%) students, Institute of Education & Research, University of the Punjab Lahore has 109(27.3%) students and Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad has 29(7.3%) students were collected.

4.4 Kruskal-Wallis H Test

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was utilized. This nonparametric alternative to the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was apt for ordinal data and allowed us to ascertain whether there were significant differences in medians across multiple groups.

The university-wise median score of students' opinions about the semester system was calculated and the following null hypothesis was tested.

H0: There is no significant difference among university-wise students' opinions about the semester system.

The null hypothesis was tested using the Kruskal-Wallis H Test about differences among university-wise students' opinions. The summary is presented in the table no 7.

Table 7: University-Wise Comparison of Students' Opinions about Semester System

Name of Universities	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.f	Asymp. Sig.
IUB	120	206.38	8.64	4	0.071
BZU	58	173.96			
UAF	84	200.04			
IER PU	109	206.72			
QAU	29	207.22			
Total	400				

The table seems to present the results of a Kruskal-Wallis H test comparing the mean ranks of questionnaire statement preferences among teachers from different universities. Let's interpret the values. The Chi-Square test statistic (H), indicating whether there are significant differences in ranks among the universities is 2.184 with 4 degrees of freedom the p-value associated with the Chi-Square test is 0.07 which is greater than the

common level of significance value 0.05. This suggests that there is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis in this context would be that there are no significant differences in the questionnaire statements' preferences among teachers from different universities.

4.5 Analysis of Questionnaire statements

Table No 8: Students' Opinions about the Semester System on a Four-Point Likert Scale

Questionnaire Statements	S.D	D	A	S.A	Total	Median
In semester system learners have to prepare limited syllabus.	30	97	212	61	400	3
In semester system curriculum includes necessary co-curricular activities.	27	76	244	53	400	3
Curriculum includes provisions for project work in semester system.	16	66	265	53	400	3
Curriculum includes provisions for field study in semester system.	17	100	245	38	400	3
Curriculum includes provisions for tutorials in semester system.	17	68	254	61	400	3
Curriculum includes provisions for seminar in semester system.	36	111	203	50	400	3
Teachers cover their content within the allocated time.	69	116	179	36	400	3
Time duration between mid-term and final term exam is satisfactory.	47	118	196	39	400	3
In semester system learners memorize their concepts for long time.	16	36	267	81	400	3
Semester system provides better grades in examination to learners.	25	73	258	44	400	3

Grading system minimizes subjective biasness in semester system.	21	70	262	47	400	3
Distributions of mid-term and final term grades are satisfactory.	31	68	231	70	400	3
In the semester system, teachers consistently offer feedback	22	57	253	68	400	3
Results are declared within allocated timeframe in semester system.	39	80	229	52	400	3
Fair sessional marks are given to learners in the semester system.	17	45	235	103	400	3
Teachers show examination scripts to learners after marking in semester system.	36	93	215	56	400	3
75% attendance of learners is mandatory in semester system.	23	62	261	54	400	3
Skillful visiting staff is appointed in semester system.	21	59	261	59	400	3
Teachers encourage students to participate in class discussion.	13	22	281	84	400	3
Teachers use online platforms to delivering lectures.	15	52	278	55	400	3

The description of the table is given below in the findings of the study section.

4.6 Major findings regarding the analysis of student data by statements are provided below:

- Overall, 32% of respondents disagreed with the notion that the semester system motivates students to concentrate on a more limited syllabus, while 68% of respondents agreed. The median value of 3 indicates that the majority of respondents are in agreement.
- Overall, 25.75% disagreed that the semester system curriculum includes necessary cocurricular activities, while 74.25% of respondents agreed. The median value of 3 indicates that the majority of respondents are in agreement

- Overall 20.5% of respondents disagreed with the statement that the semester system curriculum includes provisions for project work in the semester system. Anyhow 79.5% of respondents agreed. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 29.25% of respondents disagreed that in semester system curriculum includes provisions for field study, whereas 70.75% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 21.25% of respondents disagreed that the semester system curriculum includes provisions for tutorials in the semester system while 78.75% of respondents agreed to the statement. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- On the whole 36.75% of respondents disagreed that in semester system curriculum includes provisions for seminars in the semester system, while 63.25% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which illustrates disagreement on the part of respondents.
- On the whole 46.25% of respondents disagreed that Teachers cover their content within the allocated time, while 53.75% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which illustrates the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 41.25% of respondents disagreed that the Time duration between the mid-term and final term exam is satisfactory, while 58.75% of respondents agreed to the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts an inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 13% of respondents disagreed that in the semester system, learners memorize their concepts for a long time, while 87% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts an inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 24.5% of respondents disagreed that the Semester system provides better grades in examinations to learners, while 75.5% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts an inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 21.5% respondents disagreed that grading system minimizes subjective biasness in semester system, while 78.5% respondents agreed to the statement. Median score was 3, which depicts inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 20% of respondents disagreed that In the Semester system, teachers provide feedback continuously, while 80% of respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts an inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- On the whole 12% of respondents disagreed that Results are declared within the allocated timeframe in the semester system, while 88% of respondents agreed with

the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts an inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.

- On the whole 16% of respondents disagreed that Fair sessional marks are given to learners in the semester system, while 84% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts an inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- On the whole 32% of respondents disagreed that Teachers show examination scripts to learners after marking in the semester system, while 68% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which depicts the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 21% of respondents disagreed that 75 percent attendance of learners is mandatory in the semester system, while 79% of respondents agreed to the statement. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 80% of respondents agreed that Skillful visiting staff is appointed in the semester system, while 20% of respondents disagreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 9% of respondents disagreed that Teachers encourage students to participate in class discussion, while 91% of respondents agreed to the statement. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.
- Overall 17% of respondents disagreed that Teachers use online platforms to deliver lectures, while 83% of respondents agreed with the statement. The median score was 3, which concludes the inclination towards agreement on the part of respondents.

5. Discussion

The study aimed to examine the impact of the semester system on the teaching and learning environment at higher education institutions in Pakistan. The main emphasis was on analyzing the results using the Mann-Whitney U test, which contrasted the viewpoints of male and female students on an ordinal scale. The median, which represents the central tendency value, suggests that there is no noticeable distinction in the viewpoints of male and female students about the influence of the semester system on the teaching-learning environment (Dolma & Thinley, 2019). In general, both male and female students agreed with the statements in the questionnaire.

In addition, the study analyzed the viewpoints of students from five distinct colleges utilizing the Kruskal-Wallis H test, scrutinizing multiple variable groupings. The findings indicated no notable variations in the views of students from various universities regarding the influence of the semester system on the teaching-learning environment (Sardar et al., 2019). Universities agreed on the semester system, indicating homogeneity of perspective among higher education institutions.

Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that the study discovered certain questionnaire items in which students held differing opinions regarding the effects of the

semester system. The subsequent conversation expanded upon these dissenting perspectives, providing insight into specific student disagreements regarding the semester system (Akhtar & Hashmi, 2021). The frequency and percentage of student responses to statements were determined using the median ordinal average.

6. Conclusions

To summarize, the study has drawn some significant conclusions on the influence of the semester system on the teaching-learning environment at higher education institutions in Pakistan. A substantial proportion of students strongly disagree that the semester system promotes a limited curriculum, asserting that the syllabus needs to be sufficiently covered under this structure. There are also concerns over the inadequate length and allocation of grades for mid-term and final-term tests. Furthermore, students emphasize inconsistencies in the curriculum, suggesting that it does not correspond with their present requirements. Although some students agree that the semester system can help them do better in educational institutions. There have been concerns voiced over the keeping of instructional information for an extended period. Generally speaking, the evaluation system is considered to be satisfactory, although there are persistent concerns over the influence of student behavior on results and potential partiality in the grading procedure. Concerns about visiting faculty selection, attendance policies, and instructional strategies frequently surface, emphasizing the necessity of conducting a thorough assessment of the semester system's implementation in Pakistani higher education institutions.

7. Recommendations

Following are the recommendations based on the findings of the study.

- Improvement in evaluation of the curriculum should be made through the incorporation of co-curricular activities, tutorials, seminars, and field studies.
- Due to the dissatisfaction of students about the semester system's short duration, the academic calendar should be modified regarding duration and grade distribution.
- The assessment method should be revised to reduce subjective bias, and improvement in feedback, and result declaration.
- For the semester system, student-centered methods should be used for students' engagement instead of the traditional lecture method.
- New teaching methods should be used for students' comprehension and retention for a long time.
- There should be established clear norms and standards about assessment processes to avoid unnecessary benefits in grades that are caused by poor administration of internal assessments.

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