

Perception Towards The Semester System Of Education Among The Undergraduate Students Of Dibrugarh University, Assam

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Abstract: Education system plays a prominent role in shaping the future of a nation. In the context of constantly changing society, higher education assumes an important role to respond to the ever changing demands of society. Education is imparted through a particular system, which forms the basis for the success of the entire system of education. India's higher education system is the third largest system of the world after America and China. Semester system is a enormous innovation in the realm of higher education in India. In semester system of education, one academic session is divided into two equal halves, called semester. The focal purpose of the present study is to study the perception of undergraduate students of Jorhat district about the semester system of education. Descriptive survey method has been adopted for the present study. A sample of 60 undergraduate students from 3 colleges of Jorhat district was selected by using incidental sampling technique for the study. The investigator has prepared and used a questionnaire revealing perception of undergraduate students towards semester system has been adopted for data collection. Percentage and frequency has been used to analyze the collected data. The findings of the study revealed that perception of undergraduate students of Jorhat district towards the semester system of education was not quite satisfactory.

Keywords: Perception, Semester, undergraduate students.

I. INTRODUCTION

We are living in the era of globalization. Due to the impact of globalization, liberalization, and privatization, the sphere of education is getting a new structure for the last few years. Education system, in all over the world has never been consistent over the years. Educationists constantly explore the possibilities in all possible manners to improve the current system of education and to disclose new ideas and concepts. In India, all the stakeholders of higher education, from different platforms opined that there was a need for improving the quality of higher education. Government of India set up "National Knowledge Commission" to put some recommendations for mitigating de-quality and low access issue of higher education in the country. After this, Yashpal Committee offered some significant recommendations regarding innovative practices in higher education. In 2005, the UGC through a directive to all the universities and colleges of India to implement semester system. Thus, the

implementation of semester system was in consonance with the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission's report that wants to revamp education system through the key principles: "expansion, excellence and inclusion".

Etymologically the Word 'Semester' has been derived from a Latin Word 'sementris' which means 'Course of six Months'. The word 'Se' means Six and 'mentris' means month. So, it literally means 'Half of a Year' or 'one of the two divisions of an Academic Year'. Dictionary defines semester system as "a half-year term in a university". Semester system has a logical and systematic division of syllabus extended to six month. In the words of Ballantyn, (2003) semester system as semester system is the latest and futuristic system, which is based on the division of curriculum on equal importance in each semester. It is usually timed from 16 to 18 weeks. It omits the annual studied course. It distributes one and two year's course into two and four semester. According to Daka, (2008) in semester system

performance of students is evaluated at the end of each semester, two semesters combine and form one academic year.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Yousaf, Hasim (2012) conducted “A case study of Annual and Semester systems of Examination on Government college of Management Sciences, Peshawar, Pakistan”. The objective of the study was to know the difference of marks, percentage, passing ratio, between annual and semester system of examination. The findings revealed that there was significant and visible difference between the results of semester and annual system.

Garcha (2014) conducted a study on “Attitude of Pre-service Teacher Trainees Towards Semester System: Role of Stream”. The chief objective was to analyze the role of stream of pre-service teacher trainees on their attitude towards semester system of examination in Teacher education. The results revealed no significant difference between the arts stream and science stream pre-service teacher trainees on attitude towards semester system.

Das (2017) conducted “A Study on Students Perception About the Implementation of Semester System in the Undergraduate Colleges under Dibrugarh University”. The objective of the study was to analyze the students’ perception with regard to quality of evaluation under semester system of education. The findings of the study revealed that the perception of students towards internal assessment and overall evaluation under semester system is not quite satisfactory.

Singh and Kumar (2016) conducted a study on “Challenges in Implementation of Semester System in Globalized World”. The chief objectives of the study was to identify the challenges in semester system in the age of globalization and to provide useful suggestions for making semester system more effective. The implications of the study were that semester system provides an opportunity to students for continuous learning and assessment and helps to better paced understanding of the subjects.

Shoukat, and Muhammad (2015) conducted a study on “Perception of Teachers and Students Towards the Functionality of Semester System at University Level in The Context of Pakistani Social and Administrative Set-ups”. The objectives of the study was to find out the functionality and compatibility of the semester system at the university level in the light of perceptions of the teachers and students with the existing specific Pakistani social norms and administrative structures. The findings of the study showed a strong need of revamping the system according to its natural trends and to countering the negatively affecting social and administrative norms.

Munshi, Javed, and Hussain (2011) conducted a case study entitled “Examination in Semester System: What is Observation of Faculty and Students”. The objective of the study was to examine the students’ and teachers’ perception towards the semester system of examination at university level in Pakistan. The findings of the study revealed that most of the students disagreed with semester system of examination. But the teachers agreed with semester system of examination to some extent as compared with the students’ perception.

TITLE OF THE PAPER

Perception Towards the Semester System of Education Among the Undergraduate Students of Jorhat District, Assam.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Various academic and examination systems are in practice in educational institutions across the world. In India semester system is being in operation. To know the functionality of any system is as much essential as implementation of a system. Students are the centre of education. Therefore, how much they are benefited by any particular system is of utmost importance. Therefore the investigator visualized the need to study the perception towards the semester system of education, as it will further support in improving and modifying the practices of the semester system.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The chief objective of the study is to study the perception of the undergraduate students of Jorhat district towards the semester system of education.

DELIMITATIONS

The present study, being exploratory in nature has the following delimitations:

- ✓ The study has been delimited to the colleges of Jorhat District affiliated to Dibrugarh University.
- ✓ The study has been delimited to the students of Arts stream only.
- ✓ The study has been delimited to the students of 5th semester only.

III. METHODOLOGY

METHOD: In the light of the analytical nature of the study, the investigator had adopted descriptive survey method.

POPULATION: All the B.A. and B.sc level students studying in general degree colleges of Jorhat district under Dibrugarh University constitute the population of the present study.

SAMPLE: 3 colleges of Jorhat district affiliated to Dibrugarh University was selected randomly. 60 students from all the 3 colleges were selected by using incidental sampling technique. Those students who were present at the time of visiting the colleges were taken as sample for the study.

TOOLS USED: The investigator has used a self-constructed questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire comprised of 20 items under four broad categories, viz., evaluation under semester system, teaching-learning environment, curriculum, and others. The distribution of items under each category has been highlighted in the table below:

| Sl. No. | Category | Items |
|---------|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Evaluation | 2,3,4,7,11 |
| 2 | Teaching-learning environment | 8,12,13,17 |

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------------|
| 3 | Curriculum | 1,5,10,16,9,19,20 |
| 4 | Others | 6,7,15,18 |

Table 1: Question – wise Distribution of Marks

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED: The collected data was analyzed by using percentage and frequency.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: The investigator has analyzed the collected data with reference to each questions and respective responses.

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system provides thorough understanding of the concepts?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of Respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 32 | 53.33% |
| No | 28 | 46.67 % |

Table 2

The above table shows that, 66.66% of the respondents replied in favour of semester system and 33.33% of the respondents replied against the semester system. The tabulated data has been shown with the help of the following bar diagram:

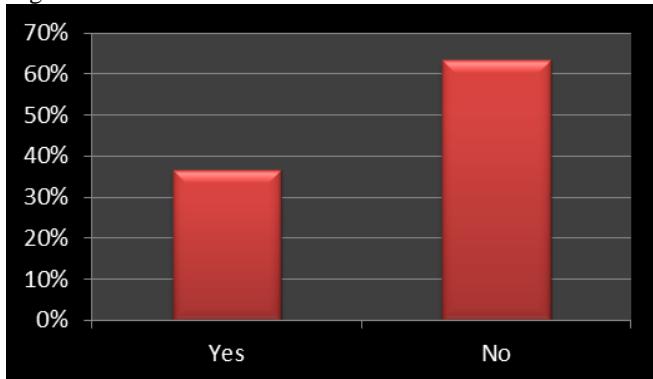


Figure 1

- ✓ Does semester system of evaluation gives true pictures of students' capabilities?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 22 | 36.67% |
| No | 38 | 63.33% |

Table 3

The above tables shows that only 46.67% of respondents were agreed that the semester system of evaluation gives true picture of students' capabilities. Remaining 53.33% of students revealed their consent against it. The data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

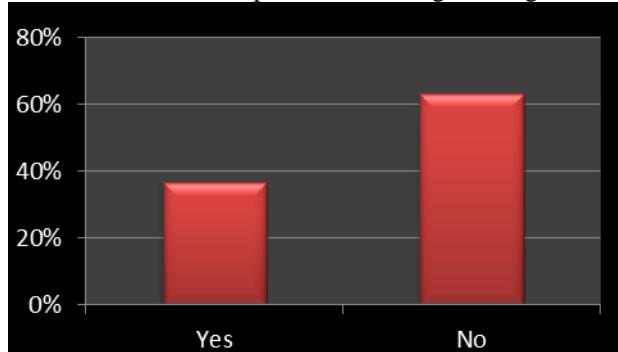


Figure 2

- ✓ Does the continuous examination creates more stress?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 45 | 75% |
| No | 15 | 25% |

Table 4

The above table reveals that 75% of respondents argued that the continuous evaluation creates more stress in them, only 25% of them were of the opinion that semester system does not create more stress in them. The data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

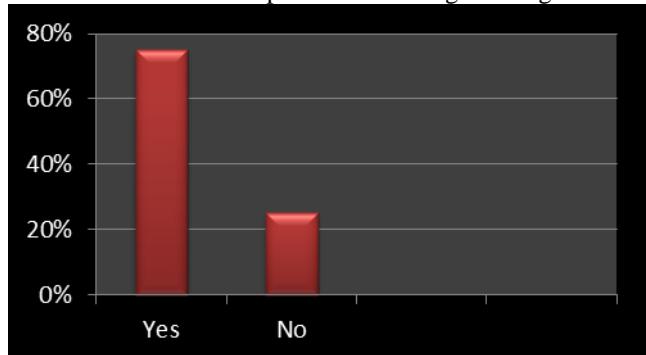


Figure 3

- ✓ Do you get enough time to prepare for your examination?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of Respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 17 | 28.33% |
| No | 43 | 71.67% |

Table 5

Table No. 4. Shows that, 41.67% of the students get enough time to prepare for their examination. But, 58.33% of students argued that they do not get enough time to prepare for their examination. The data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

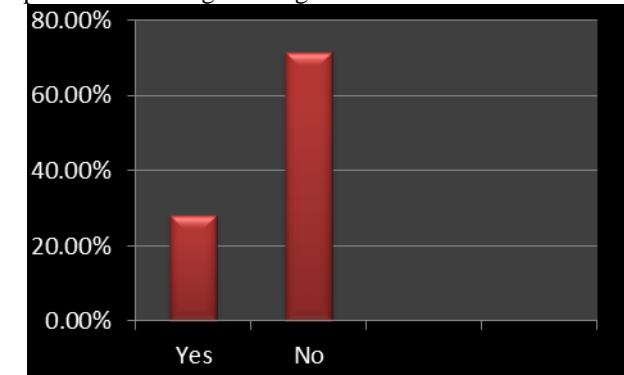


Figure 4

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system of education impose academically over burden?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 52 | 86.67% |
| No | 08 | 13.33% |

Table 6

Table No.5. reveals that, 86.67% of the students opined that semester system of education impose academically over burden, only rest 13.33% of students showed reversed opinion. The tabulated data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

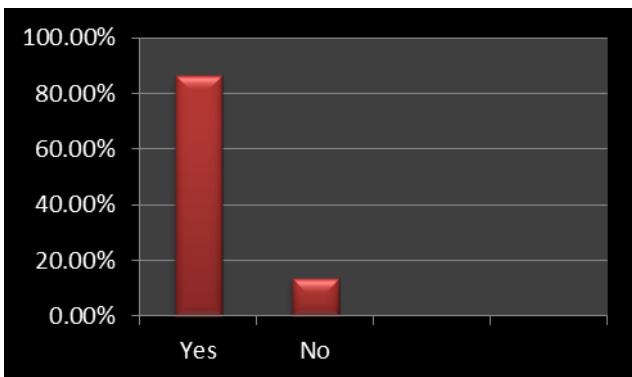


Figure 5

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system creates regular study habits among students?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 35 | 58.33% |
| No | 25 | 41.67% |

Table 9

Table No. 8 shows that, 58.33% of students opined that semester system creates regular study habits among them, but 41.67% students gave negative opinion about it. The data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

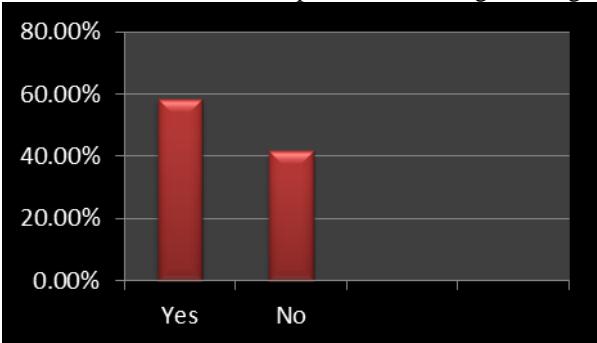


Figure 8

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system is very costly?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 50 | 83.33% |
| No | 10 | 16.67% |

Table 7

Table No. 6. Shows that majority of the respondents, i.e., 83.33% perceives semester system as very costly. Only 16.67% of the respondents perceived it as affordable. The data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

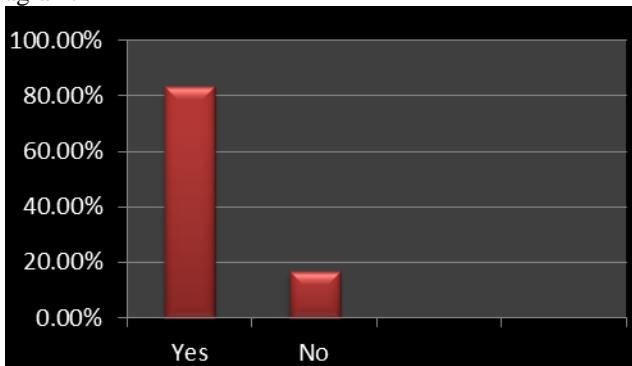


Figure 6

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system promotes presentation skills among the students?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 37 | 61.66% |
| No | 23 | 38.33% |

Table 10

The above table reveals that 61.66% of the students gave positive response to the question, whereas, 38.33% of the students gave negative response to the same question. The tabulated data has been shown with the help of the bar diagram below:

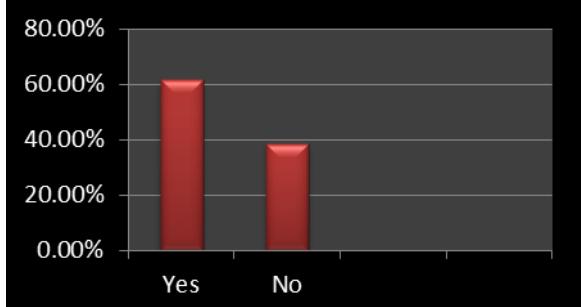


Figure 9

- ✓ Do you think that students tend to get better marks under semester system?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 49 | 81.67 |
| No | 11 | 18.33% |

Table 8

Table No. 7. Shows that 81.67% of respondents opined that students get better marks under semester system. Only 18.33% of the respondents revealed their consent against it. The data has been demonstrated with a bar diagram below:

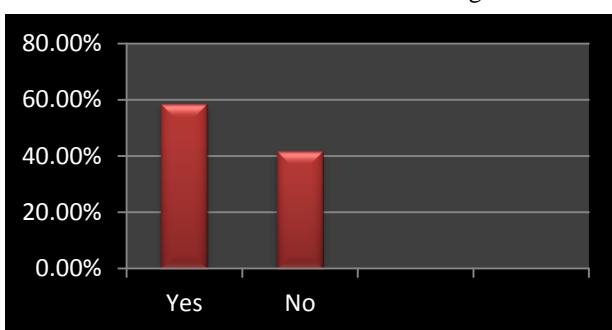


Figure 7

- ✓ Do you think that in semester system, too much information is crammed into each course?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 38 | 66.33% |
| No | 22 | 33.67% |

Table 11

The above table revealed that 66.33% of the respondent argued that too much information is crammed into each course in semester system. While, the responses of the remaining 33.67% take opposite view. These data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

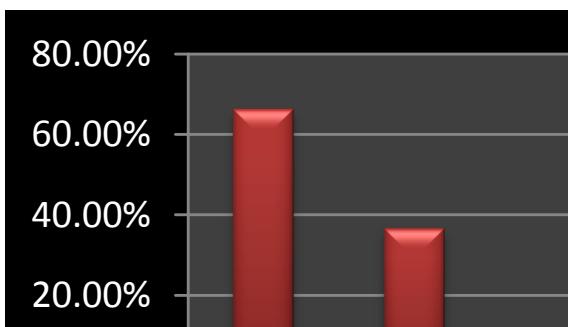


Figure 10

- ✓ Is the spacing between each examination is better?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 19 | 31.67% |
| No | 41 | 68.33% |

Table 12

The data in the above table indicated that 31.67% of the respondents gave positive response to the item, while, 68.33% of the respondents gave negative response to the item. The tabulated data has been demonstrated in the following bar diagram:

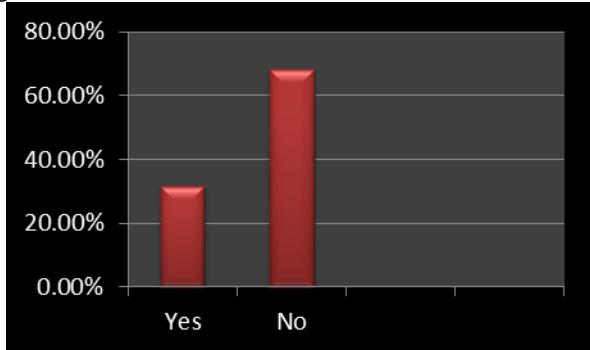


Figure 11

- ✓ Do the semester system provides more leisurely learning pace?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 26 | 43.33% |
| No | 34 | 56.67% |

Table 13

The data tabulated above, shows that 43.33% of the students perceived that they are provided with more leisurely learning pace, whereas, remaining 56.67% students showed opposite perception about it. The above tabulated data has been demonstrated below with the help of a bar diagram:

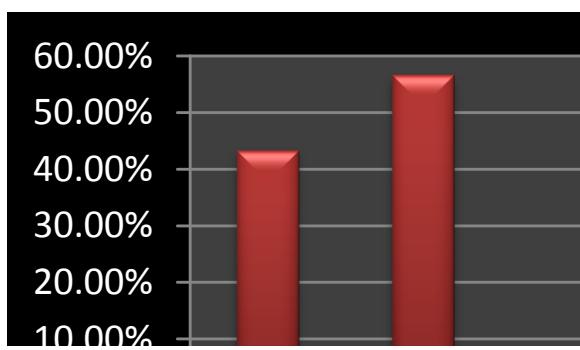


Figure 12

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system provides more opportunities to have close interaction with your teachers?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 52 | 86.67% |
| No | 08 | 13.33% |

Table 14

The data tabulated above reveals that 86.67% of the students perceived that semester system provides more opportunities to have close interaction with their teachers, while only 13.33% of the students gave negative response to the same. The tabulated data has been demonstrated with the help of a bar diagram below:

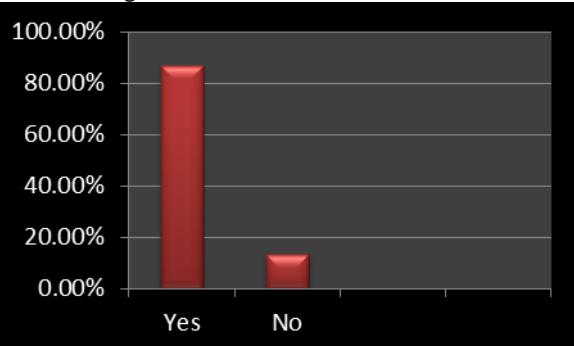


Figure 13

- ✓ Do you think that the semester system increases the chances of favoritism and biases?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 18 | 30% |
| No | 42 | 70% |

Table 15

The able table shows that only 30% of the students gave positive response to the item, whereas, 70% of the students gave negative response to the same item. In order to make clear representation the above tabulated data, these are demonstrated with the help of a bar diagram below:

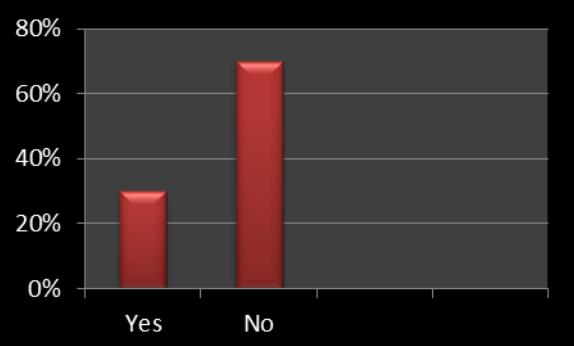


Table 14

- ✓ Does the semester system help you to receive continuous feedback?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 40 | 66.67% |
| No | 20 | 33.33% |

Table 16

The above table shows that 66.67% of the students show positive perception towards semester system, and 33.33% of the students gave negative positive perception towards

semester system. The data has been demonstrated with the help of bar diagram:

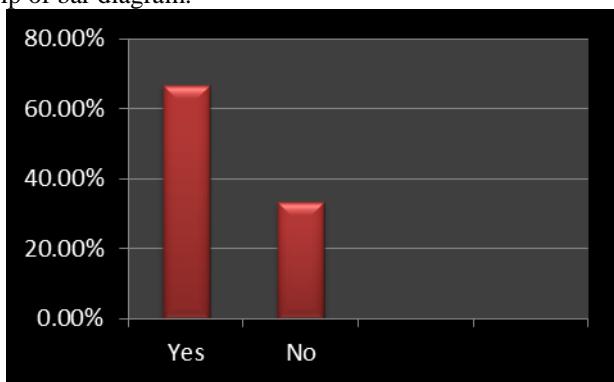


Figure 15

- ✓ Do you remain behind in your assignments throughout most of the time?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 45 | 75% |
| No | 15 | 25% |

Table 17

The above tabulated data revealed that 75% of the students argued that they have to remain behind in your assignments throughout most of the time in semester system, while, remaining 25% gave a contrastive opinion about it. These data has been demonstrated below with the help of a bar diagram:

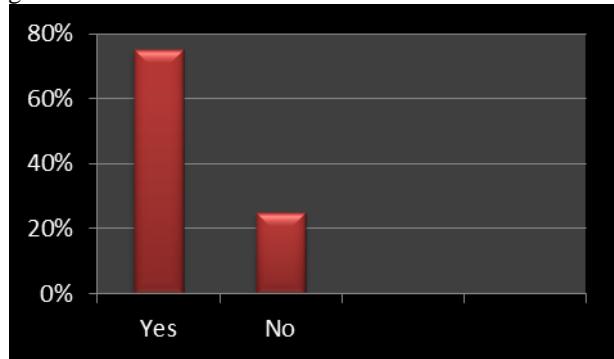


Figure 16

- ✓ Do you get opportunity to learn at your own pace?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 19 | 31.67% |
| No | 41 | 68.33% |

Table 18

The above table shows that only 31.67% of the students opined that they get opportunity to learn at their own pace, while, 68.33% of the students gave contrastive opinion in this regard. The data has been presented with the help of a bar diagram below:

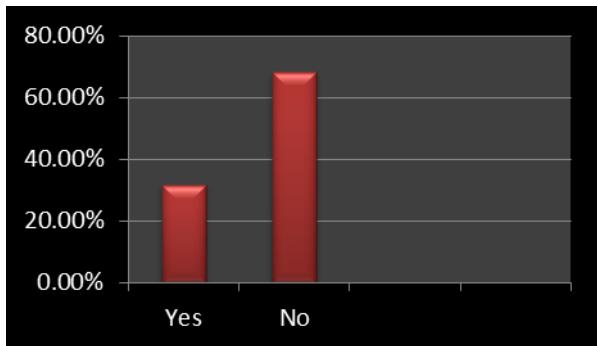


Figure 17

- ✓ Do the students graduate sooner?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 46 | 76.67% |
| No | 14 | 23.33% |

Table 19

The data presented in the above table indicated that 76.67% of the respondents perceives that students graduate sooner in semester system, whereas, 23.33% of the respondents perceived it negative. The data will be better represented with the help of a bar diagram given below:

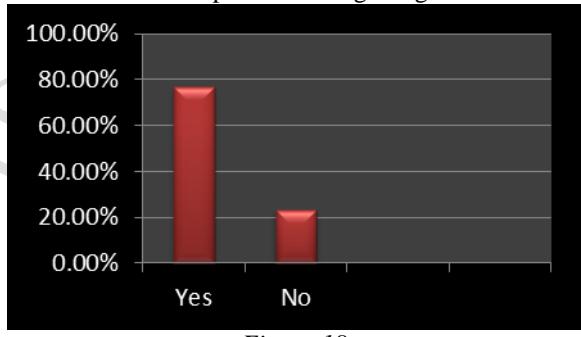


Figure 18

- ✓ Do the semester system helps to broaden the students' perspective?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 33 | 55% |
| No | 27 | 45% |

Table 20

The data in the above table shows that 55% of the students gave positive response to the respective item , whereas, 45% of the respondents gave negative response to the same. The data has been demonstrated with the help of a bar diagram below:

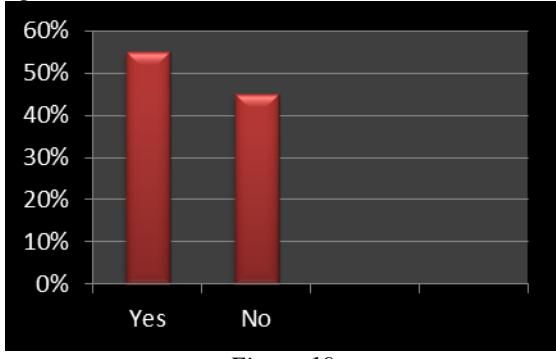


Figure 19

- ✓ Is there variety of subject under semester system?

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) of respondents |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 39 | 65% |
| No | 21 | 35% |

Table 21

The above table reveals that 65% of the students perceives that there are variety of subject under semester system, whereas, remaining 35% of the students showed negative perception about the same. The data has been demonstrated with the help of the following bar diagram:

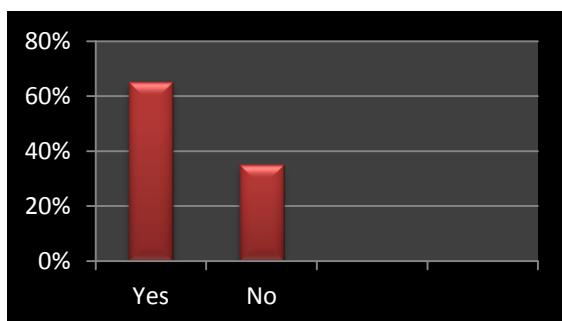


Figure 20

Findings: The major findings of the study are demonstrated below:

| Category | Percentage of Favourable Responses | Percentage of Unfavourable Responses |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Evaluation | 40.67% | 59.33% |
| Curriculum | 44.29% | 55.71% |
| Teaching-learning environment | 59.33% | 40.67% |
| Others | 51.11% | 48.89% |

Table 22

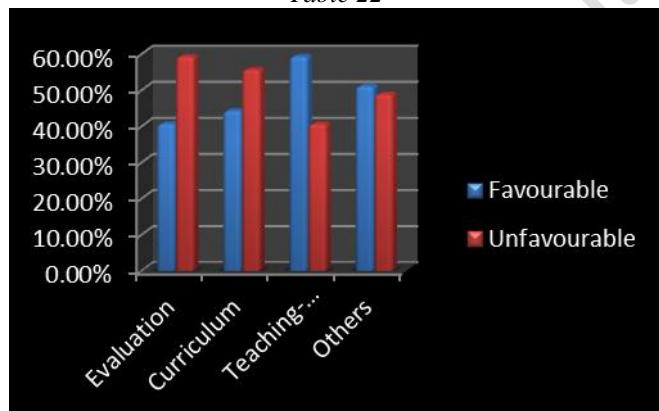


Figure 21

| Percentage of favourable perception | Percentage of unfavourable perception |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 48.85% | 51.15% |

Table 23

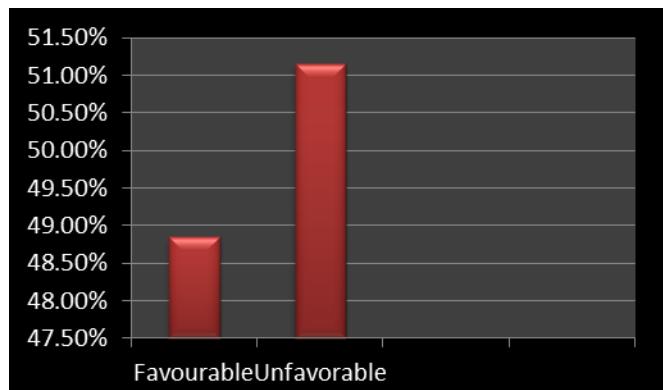


Figure 22

Therefore, the major findings of the study are enumerated below:

- ✓ 40.67% of the respondents showed favourable perception towards the evaluation under semester system.
- ✓ 59.33% of the respondents showed unfavourable perception towards the evaluation under semester system.
- ✓ 44.29% of the respondents showed favourable perception towards the curriculum under semester system.
- ✓ 55.71% of the respondents showed unfavourable perception towards the curriculum under semester system.
- ✓ 59.33% of the respondents showed favourable perception towards the teaching-learning environment under semester system.
- ✓ 40.67% of the respondents showed unfavourable perception towards teaching-learning environment the under semester system.
- ✓ 51.11% of the respondents showed favourable perception towards other aspects of semester system.
- ✓ 48.89% of the respondents showed unfavourable perception towards other aspects of semester system.
- ✓ 48.85% of the respondents showed favourable perception towards the semester system of education.
- ✓ 51.15% of the respondents showed unfavourable perception towards the semester system of education.

IV. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

As regards the present study students' perception towards the semester system is analyzed here. According to the results and findings of the study, more than half of the respondents have unfavourable perception towards semester system of education. Percentage of students that tend to reveal unfavourable perception is more in case of evaluation dimension in comparison to other dimension of the semester system. The findings of Munshi, Javed, and Hussain (2011), and Das (2017) matched the results of the present study.

Keeping in view all these facts, the investigator had offered the following recommendations for the improvement of the semester system in the colleges affiliated to Dibrugarh University:

- ✓ There is a burning need of comprehensive reforms in existing assessment structure for the evaluation of students' learning achievement under semester system.
- ✓ Necessary actions should be made for giving enough flexibility in exam's schedules, as majority of the students

opined that they do not get enough time to prepare for examination.

- ✓ The echelon of teachers' proficiency should be enhanced through different workshops for the more better provisions of conceptual as well as factual knowledge.
- ✓ The evaluating techniques should be made more reliable and valid for better measurement of students' performance, so as to reflect a real picture of students' capabilities.
- ✓ Innovative practices should be adopted to increase their revenue rather than relying upon the students' fees, so that the cost of semester system can be decreased and brought on the reach of the common people.
- ✓ The relative grading method may be fruitful in the semester system so that the biased attitude and favouritism may be curbed.

In conclusion, it can be said that the perception of the undergraduate students of Dibrugarh University is not quite favourable and satisfactory.

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