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**STUDENTS' LEVEL OF PERCEPTION ON THE SEMESTER SYSTEM**

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DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijrpa.1139>**ABSTRACT**

The present study was conducted on 823 undergraduate students selected randomly from different undergraduate colleges affiliated with Mizoram University to determine their level of perception of the semester system. The perception scale developed by the investigator was used to collect information. The study revealed that the highest number of college students had a moderate perception of the semester system, and only a few students had extremely favourable or extremely unfavourable perceptions of the semester system in the undergraduate colleges of Mizoram.

**KEYWORDS:** *Perception, Semester system, Undergraduate College.***INTRODUCTION**

The semester system is an educational system widely used in many countries worldwide. It is a method of organizing and structuring the academic year into two or more semesters, each lasting for a specific number of months. In India, the semester system has been in existence since the late 1990s and has been implemented in various universities and colleges across the country. The term "semester" is defined as "half of the academic year, typically 16 to 18 weeks" by the Dictionary of Education

As a modern approach, the semester system has been adopted by several Indian universities at both undergraduate and graduate levels. This is a novel approach for higher education institutions in India. Agricultural teaching inspired this new method. In 1959, a turning point in agricultural education began with the founding of India's first agricultural institution. This system of higher education takes its cues from the United States' Land Grant Colleges and is responsible for providing education in various agricultural fields through formal coursework,

research, and extension programs. Originally, most agricultural schools followed the Land Grant Colleges' model and used a trimester system, but now more than half have shifted to a semester schedule.

The Indian Institutes of Technology have also made pioneering efforts to implement the semester system in India. This is mainly because technological institutes must depend to a large extent on the knowledge and techniques developed in advanced countries. As a result of the vital flow of ideas and information from developed countries, the concept of the semester system also influenced these institutions. The three most important functions of technological institutes are the transmission of knowledge, development of new techniques, and research and development of new technologies. Their plan is to create science courses in engineering that take a contemporary approach to curriculum development, which will apply to the course work as well as the laboratory instruction. The institutes concluded that the semester system was the most appropriate method to use in order to accomplish these goals.

India's educational system has begun to gradually incorporate the semester system. After agricultural and technological institutes, a small number of affiliated and residential universities introduced the semester system, either partially or entirely. In 1967, Meerut University was the first to implement a semester system on a broad basis. The system was implemented in approximately 55 connected institutions with more than 60,000 students. In addition to Meerut University, many other universities in India have adopted the semester system, such as Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University, and M.S. University, Madras University, Annamalai University, and Jawaharlal Nehru University. Numerous universities in the country have implemented the semester system at the undergraduate and graduate levels to modify the organization of higher education. In response to the mandate from the University Grants Commission, Mizoram University implemented the semester system for all its affiliated colleges beginning in the 2011-2012 academic year.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Dangi (2016)** investigated students' perspectives on the adoption of the semester system. The outcome demonstrated that university students viewed the semester system and its execution positively. However, the students were dissatisfied with the policies and practices, the arduous evaluation system, and the regular examinations. In contrast, university professors exhibited an unfavourable opinion of the semester system.

**Mehmood et al. (2014)** evaluated students' and teachers' perspectives on Pakistan's semester assessment system in higher education. According to the findings of the study, students viewed the semester system as knowledge-based and effective in covering all aspects of their performance. Most students preferred the semester system because it improved their presentation abilities and fostered a conducive learning environment. On the other hand, the semester system has increased instructors' workload, favouritism, and bias, and does not provide sufficient time for extracurricular activities. The semester system was viewed favourably by most teachers.

**Lalrinsanga et al. (2021)** did a study titled “Perceptions of government Aizawl West College students about the semester system at the college level.” The study demonstrated that students had favourable opinions of the semester system. The majority of students had a positive view of the semester system, including effective engagement, transparency, integrity, and teacher and administrative responsibility.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

To determine the students’ level of perception of the semester system in undergraduate colleges of Mizoram.

**METHODOLOGY & ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The present study used a descriptive survey method.

***Population and sample***

All college students of Mizoram comprise the population; of these, 823 college students were selected as the sample for the study. The following table shows the number of selected students from different colleges in Mizoram:

**Table 1: Number of selected students from different colleges.**

Sl. No.	Colleges	Streams	No. of students
1	Pachhunga University College	Arts	17
		Science	80
		Commerce	27
2	Govt. Aizawl College	Arts	48
		Commerce	74
3	Govt. Hrangbana College	Arts	22
		Commerce	12
4	Govt. Zirtiri Residential Science College	Science	59
5	Govt. Aizawl North College	Arts	59

6	Govt. Johnson College	Arts	23
7	Govt. Aizawl West College	Arts	21
8	Govt. T. Romana College	Arts	52
9	Govt. J. Thankima College	Arts	27
10	Lunglei Government College	Arts	6
		Science	7
11	Govt. Hnahthial College	Arts	5
12	Govt. J. Buana College	Arts	10
		Commerce	27
13	Higher & Technical Institute of Mizoram	Arts	15
		Commerce	36
14	Govt. College Champhai	Arts	5
		Science	9
		Commerce	19
15	Govt. Khawzawl College	Arts	6
16	Govt. Kamalanagar College	Arts	49
17	Govt. Lawngtlai College -	Arts	7
18	Govt. Kolasib College	Arts	36
		Science	18
19	Govt. Serchhip College	Arts	10
		Science	10
20	Govt. Saiha College	Arts	17
21	Helen Lowery College	Arts	-
		Commerce	10
<b>TOTAL</b>			823

Table 1 shows that 823 college students were selected from 21 undergraduate colleges in Mizoram, from the science, arts, and commerce streams.

To study students' perceptions of the semester system, the investigator prepared a perception scale for college students. The perception scale for college students consists of 27 statements categorized into five components as follows:

1. General observation component
2. Course of study component
3. Evaluation component
4. Method of teaching component

**Choice Based Credit System component**

Each statement in the perception scale has five response options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. For scoring purposes, the positive statements were given the scores 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and the negative statements were given the scores 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

**Reliability of the scale:** The coefficient of reliability was computed using the split-half method of correlation and was found to be 0.90.

**Validity of the scale:** Content validity was established by seeking the judgments of ten experts and professionals in the field of education regarding the nature of the content covered by the statements on the semester system.

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**Objective: To determine students’ perception of the semester system in undergraduate colleges in Mizoram.**

To determine students’ level of perception of the semester system, a student perception scale developed by the investigator was administered to college students selected for the present sample. After scoring, the scores were converted into z-scores.

Students’ perception scores were converted into z-scores. Table 2 shows the z-score norms for the students’ perception scale on the semester system in undergraduate colleges in Mizoram.

**Table 2: Z score norms for students’ perception of semester system in undergraduate colleges of Mizoram**  
 Mean: 107.69      Standard Deviation: 10.486      Number: 823

Raw score	Z-Score	Raw score	Z-Score	Raw score	Z-Score
135	+2.60	113	+0.51	92	-1.50
134	+2.51	112	+0.41	91	-1.59
133	+2.41	111	+0.32	90	-1.69
132	+2.32	110	+0.22	89	-1.78
131	+2.22	109	+0.12	88	-1.88
130	+2.13	108	+0.03	87	-1.97
128	+1.94	107	-0.07	86	-2.07
127	+1.84	106	-0.16	85	-2.16
126	+1.75	105	-0.26	84	-2.26
125	+1.65	104	-0.35	83	-2.35
124	+1.56	103	-0.45	82	-2.45
123	+1.46	102	-0.54	81	-2.55
122	+1.36	101	-0.64	80	-2.64
121	+1.27	100	-0.73	79	-2.74
120	+1.17	99	-0.83	73	-3.31
119	+1.08	98	-0.92	69	-3.69
118	+0.98	97	-1.02	68	-3.79
117	+0.89	96	-1.11	66	-3.98

116	+0.79	95	-1.21	60	-4.55
115	+0.70	94	-1.31		
114	+0.60	93	-1.40		

Based on this z-score norms, students may be categorized into seven categories as shown in the following table 3.

**Table 3: Norms for interpretation on students’ level of Perception on Semester System.**

Sl.No.	Range of z-scores	Grade	Levels of Perception
1	+2.01 and above	A	Extremely Favourable Perception
2	+1.26 to +2.00	B	Favourable Perception
3	+0.51 to +1.25	C	Above Average Perception
4	-0.50 to +0.50	D	Moderate Perception
5	-1.25 to -0.51	E	Below Average Perception
6	-2.00 to -1.26	F	Unfavourable Perception
7	-2.01 and below	G	Extremely Unfavourable Perception

Students’ level of perception on semester system in undergraduate colleges of Mizoram is presented in table 4.

**Table 4: Students’ level of perception on semester system in undergraduate colleges of Mizoram**

Level of perception	Number and percentage
Extremely favourable perception	29 (3.52%)
Favourable perception	40 (4.86%)
Above average perception	156 (18.96)
Moderate perception	407 (49.45%)
Below average perception	121 (14.70%)
Unfavourable perception	44 (5.35%)
Extremely unfavourable perception	26 (3.16%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>823</b>

Table 4 shows that with respect to students’ level of perception of the semester system in undergraduate colleges of Mizoram, (3.52%) of college students had extremely favourable perception of the semester system, 4.86% of college students had favourable perception, 18.96% of college students had above average perception, 49.45% of college students had moderate perception, 14.70% of college students had below average perception, 5.35% of college students had unfavourable perception, and 3.16% of college students had extremely unfavourable perception of the semester system. This means that the largest percentage of college students had a moderate level of perception of the semester system. Only a few students had extremely favourable and extremely unfavourable perceptions of the semester system.

## FINDINGS

The highest number of college students had a moderate perception of the semester system. There were only a few students who had extremely favourable or extremely unfavourable perceptions of the semester system.

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