A Comparative Study of the Evaluation System of Semester System and Annual System

Nadia Ghaffar, M.A. (English), B.Ed.
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Abstract

The study intends to analyze and compare in detail the evaluation system of the semester system and annual system. The evaluation system of both the systems is explicitly different with little similarities. There is a general view which prevails in public that the semester system keeps a constant check on the learning and comprehension of the students whereas in annual system, evaluation is based on cramming the material only.

The purpose of this study is to analyse which system is the better one from the point of view of evaluation and what improvements can we recommend in these systems.

The major instrument of study is the questionnaire. Two different kinds of questionnaires were designed, for Faculty Zone and for Student Zone. The method of taking interviews was also

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adopted, especially for the members of the Faculty Zone. For this research, Semester system of three universities, namely, those of National University of Modern Languages, International Islamic University and Quaid-e-Azam Univerity and three colleges which follow annual system, namely, Asghar Mall Boys College, F.G. College for Women, and Sir Syed College for Boys were selected. Through random sampling 10 Students and 10 Teachers from each university and college were selected for the study and questionnaires were distributed among them.

1. Introduction

Evaluation is the process of judging or measuring the worth or appreciating it in the paradigms of that particular discipline.

1.1. Importance

Evaluation is concerned with making judgments about things. When we act as evaluators we attribute 'value' or 'worth' to behaviors, objects or processes. To be more effective however, evaluation requires that judgment be based on appropriate and relevant data. In every institution or classroom, abundant data exists, using which evaluations can be made. It is indispensable for all educators to employ such data when making their judgments particularly about students. Thus, an effective evaluation of a curriculum or a student's performance will be based upon appropriate data and will reflect what that data reveal.

All educators need to regard evaluation as both a necessary and integral function of their teaching. For curriculum developers, there is no option to providing guidelines and directions for the evaluations in the production of a final curriculum document. There are several powerful reasons for educators to become more familiar with and employ evaluation in purposeful, useful ways in educational institutions. Evaluation is essential to provide feedback to learners. Researches have emphasized the valuable contribution evaluation makes to student learning through the feedback of student's performance. This means more than providing tests and examination scores, project results and so forth. It involves useful information that addresses student's strengths and weaknesses and how to improve their performance. Evaluation is

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essential in determining how well learners have achieved the stated objectives. Evaluation provides information to improve curriculum. Evaluation data collected during a unit of study will provide the basis for changes that will make the curriculum more effective in meeting the objectives. Students in personal decision-making employ information from evaluation. In particular future courses of action concerning studies, employment, a career and the like are based on evaluative data given as feedback to students from their participation in a curriculum. Evaluation provides useful information to curriculum developers to clarify the stated objectives. Feedback obtained through evaluative procedures indicate how realistic and effective the original objectives were and where changes are required. Those interested in how well students perform, i.e., parents, students, educational systems, employers, government planners, and so forth need constructive information on student's performance to enhance their decision making effectiveness. Curriculum developers should ensure that provision is made for evaluative information that is meaningful and valid. Evaluation helps the teachers to understand to which extent the students are assimilating the course. It helps in measuring the effectiveness of the whole process of education. The process also helps in measuring the effectiveness of the teaching methods and the instructional material. It encourages students to do more and the teachers to work on refining the process of learning.

1.2. Research Objective

The main objective of the research is to find out the efficacy of the evaluation systems of annual system and semester system as these systems are prevalent in universities and colleges of Pakistan.

1.3. Procedure of Evaluation in Semester and Annual System

The process of evaluation is different in both the Semester and Annual Systems. In Annual System the process of evaluation of the students is based upon the exam taken at the end of the year and students are promoted to the next year. In this kind of system usually lecture method is followed. Evaluation is only based on written papers.

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On the other hand in Semester System the academic year is broken down into usually two equal parts of six months each. Exams are taken at the end of each semester. The process of evaluation in Semester System does not relay completely on the written exam taken at the end of each semester. Presentations assignments and assessment tests/Quiz are a part of final evaluation. In Punjab only Punjab University follows Annual System. Several colleges are affiliated with it whereas, all other universities follow Semester System.

1.4. Research Methodology

The major instrument of study is the questionnaire. Basically two different kinds of questionnaires were designed, for Faculty Zone and for Student Zone. The method of taking interviews was also in practice, especially for the members of the Faculty Zone. For the research three universities of Semester system i.e., National University of Modern languages, International Islamic University and Quaid-e-azam Univerity and three colleges following annual system i.e Asghar Mall Boys College. F.G College for Women and Sir Syed College for Boys are selected. Through random sampling 10 Students and 10 Teachers from each university and colleges are selected for the study and questionnaires were distributed among them.

Literature Review

Mamta Agarwal (2004) suggests "Evaluation is universally accepted as an integral part of teaching and learning. It is one of the basic components of any curriculum and plays a pivotal role in determining what learners learn.". Evaluation also plays a central role in deciding what teachers teach and how they teach; Reardon et al. (1994),

According to Charles D. Hopkins and Richard L. Antes (1992), "Evaluation is the continuous inspection of all available information concerning the students, teachers ,educational program and the teacher learning process to determine the degree of change in students and from valid judgment about the students and the effectiveness of the program"

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The basic purpose of the evaluation is to formulate a judgment based on the results obtained. It helps in determining the degree to which goals are being achieved. With the help of the process of evaluation the level of understanding can be assessed and future educational objectives are set based on students' needs. For the students, evaluation provides feedback regarding strengths and weaknesses. It increases the level of motivation. Improvement of the teacher's teaching and the student's learning through judgment using available information is the ultimate function of the process of evaluation.

Evaluation is an aid to clarification of the significant objectives of education as well as process for determining the extent to which students are developing in desired ways. Because an evaluation can take any number of directions, the first steps in its design aim to define its purpose and scope—to establish what questions it will and will not address. "To ensure the evaluation's credibility and relevance to its intended users, the evaluator must develop a clear understanding of the program's purpose and goals and develop researchable evaluation questions that are feasible, appropriate to the program and that address the intended users' needs" (Nancy.R.Kingsbury,2012)

Basically there are two types of evaluation:

- Formative Evaluation:

  It is used to provide information for curriculum review, identification of the effectiveness of the instructional process and assessment of the teaching process during period of instruction.

- Summative Evaluation:

  Its process are assigned of marks, certification of skills, knowledge, abilities, feedback to students and comparisons of outcome of different groups. This process is required were judgments are made concerning the terminal and semi terminal nature of the evaluation. (Robert cannon and David Newble, 2000)

As with all evaluation, the process of evaluating learning consist of two major elements

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Gathering information about learning, and then making judgment based upon that information.

   a. The first and major source of information about student's learning will be the results of your program of student assessment, the examination and the test results, assignments, projects, dissertations, field reports, clinical notes and other projects and observation of student learning.

   b. The second way of evaluating learning is through well designed and administered evaluations of teaching. Apart from formal questionnaire surveys, evaluation by brain storming an issue with the students or by using the evaluation discussion method can be a very powerful learning experience for all involved.

   c. The third way of evaluating learning is classroom assessment techniques. (Richard Arends, 1998).

According to Leslie W. Trowbridge and Rodger W. Bybee (1997),

"A test is only a sample of what is being learned, other means of evaluation should also play a major part in determining the achievement and development of the students multiple talents"

The student is best able to determine what he is learning and how he feels about it. Teachers should ask students to judge their own achievements. One way to do so is to give the students a list of objectives for a unit or course and have them judge what they know or feel about the course before and after studying the material. This method has been shown to be a valid measuring technique and gives a better indication of the actual growth than dose the typical test.

Gronuld (1991) provided several principles that should guide teachers as they design an assessment and evaluation system and create their own test. According to Gronuld teachers should construct their test so that it measures clearly the learning objectives they have communicated to students. The test should be in harmony with teacher's instructional objectives.

Most lessons and units of instruction contain a variety of objectives ranging from the recall of factual information to the understanding, analysis and creative application of specific principles.

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A good test does not focus entirely on one type of objective such as factual recall; rather it should measure a representative sample of the teacher's learning objectives. Remember however, that measuring more complex skills such as higher- level reasoning is more costly and time consuming. A good test items that are most appropriate for a particular objective. e.g. Some type of test items , such as matching or fill in the blanks are better for measuring recall of specific information, other such as essay items, are better for tapping higher – level thinking process and skills.

A test is considered reliable when it produces dependable, consistent sources for persons who take it more than once over a period of time. A test is said to be valid when it measures what it claims to measure. Teacher made test that are clearly written and minimizing guessing are generally more reliable than ambiguous ones that encourage guessing. Likewise, tests, containing a fairly large number of items are generally more reliable than those with just a few items. A test that is well planned and covers the full range of objectives and topics is most likely to ensure validity.

Teaching students the necessary skills to take the test also increases the validity because, in some instances, students may know the information being tested but simply cannot read or interpret the questions. No single test, however, can give a completely accurate picture of what student knows or can do. Thus, there is always the need to interpret the results with caution and to rely on multiple sources of assessment information before making final judgment about student's work.

This final principle is meant to remind teachers that although test may be used primarily to diagnose or assess student achievement, they can also be learning experiences for students. Going over test results, for instance, provides teachers with opportunities to re-teach important information students may missed. Debate and discussion over 'right' answers can stimulate further study about a topic. Effective teachers integrate their testing process into their instructional programme of the purpose of guiding and enhancing student learning.

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Currently there appears to be a nationwide demand for more accountability for schools and teachers as well as a call for higher standards. There is a general belief that the emphasis over the past decade of focusing on minimal competencies measured with multiple choice, standardize tests has raised the basic skill level of the students slightly but has failed to promote and measure higher level thinking and problem solving many educators, parents and test the measurement experts believe that this situation can be correcting by introducing new approaches to student assessment such as the use of performance tasks, authentic assessment, student portfolios, and grading for team work. Assessment and evaluation are among the most important aspects of teacher's work and carry heavy responsibilities. Teachers must not only do this part of their job well but also must make sure that no harm comes to the vulnerable students. (Richard .I. Arends, 1998)

Data Analysis of the Faculty Zone

Q#1-Own Plan of Evaluation
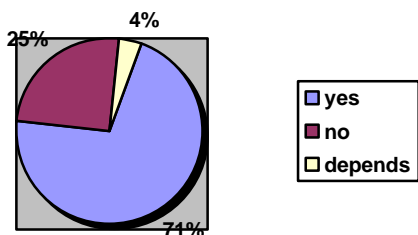
Annual System
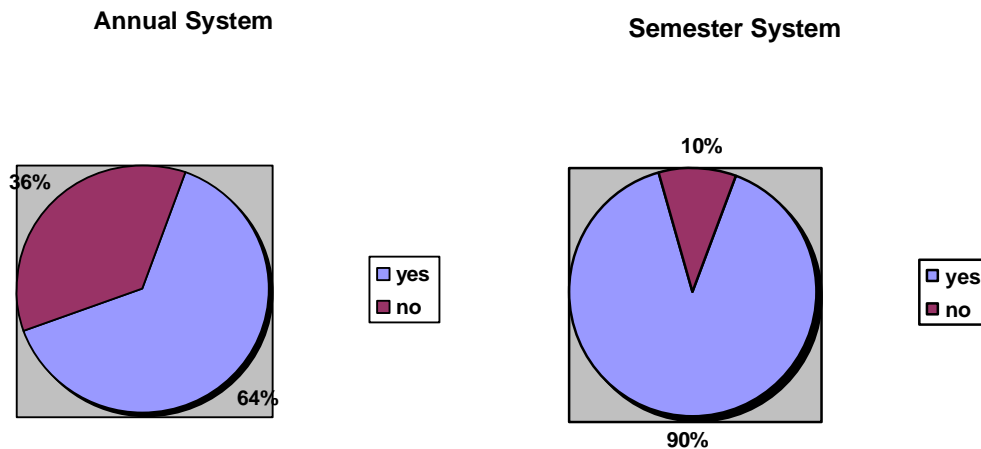
Semester System

The teachers of the Semester System has the privilege over the teachers of the Annual System because they get the opportunity to device their own plan of evaluation whereas, the teachers of Annual System has to follow the set pattern devised by the university.
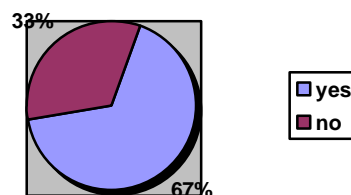
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Q#2-Stress due to work load

Annual System

Semester System

4%
25%

yes
no
depends

71%

33%

yes
no

67%

Faculty members of both the systems were of the view that there is more stress due to workload on the students of Semester System because they have to show continuous output through out the year. This result shows that Semester System demands more hard work on the student's as well as on the teacher's part.

Q#3-Continuous feed back of student's performance.

Annual System

Semester System

25%

yes
no

75%

42%

yes
no

58%
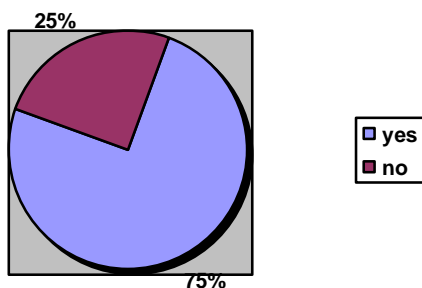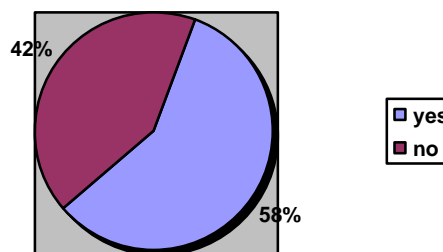
Majority of the faculty members agreed that Semester System provides continuous feed

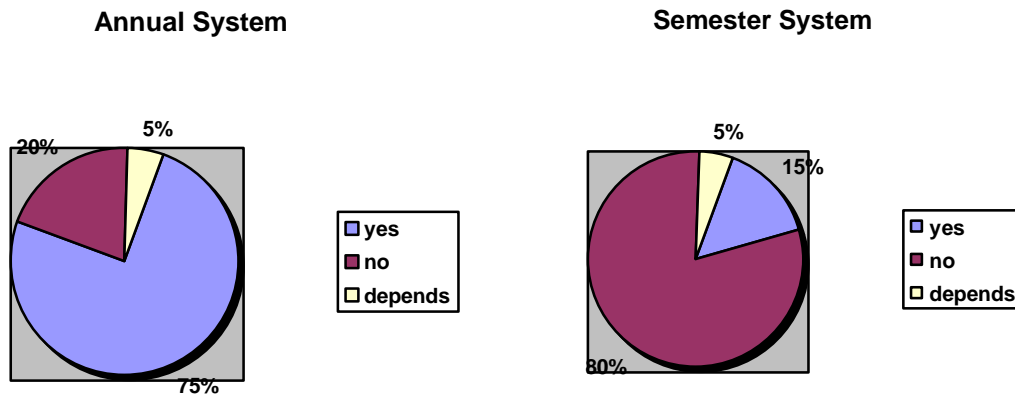Language in India www.languageinindia.com
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back of student's performance.

Q#4-Similar grading system

Annual System

5%
20%

- yes
- no
- depends

75%

Semester System

5%
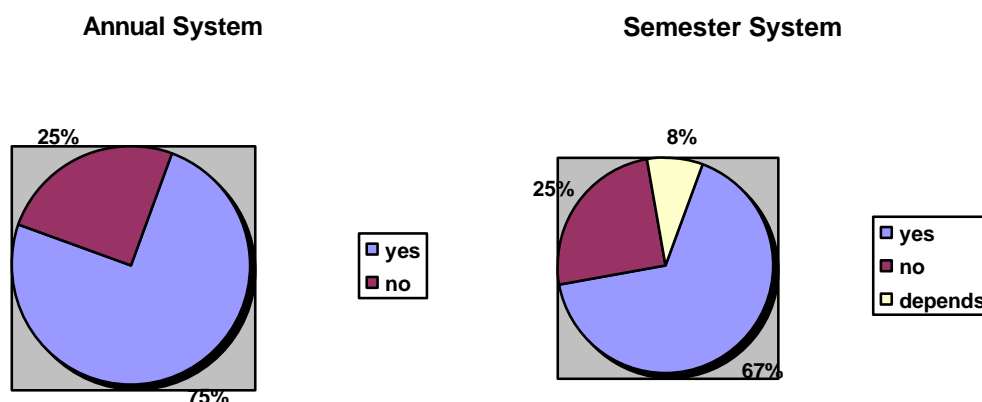15%

- yes
- no
- depends

80%

Majority of the faculty members think that good grading system helps in motivating the students to perform better therefore grading system in both Annual and Semester System should be the same, whereas rest of the faculty members think that it is impossible to have similar grading system in both. It means that the evaluation system of the Semester System is much more appreciated.

Q#5-Motivation due to grading system

Annual System

14%
6%

- yes
- no
- depends

80%

Semester System

3%
2%

- yes
- no
- depends

95%
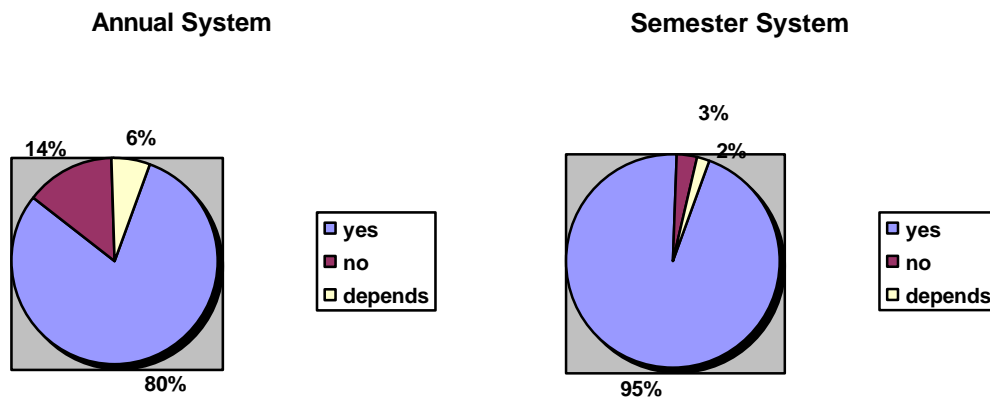
Faculty members of both Annual and Semester System agreed that students get motivated due to the encouraging grading system of the Semester System.

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Q#6-Validity of the modes of evaluation

Annual System

Semester System

25%

25%

- yes
- no

8%

25%

- yes
- no
- depends

67%

75%

Most of the faculty members think that in Semester System the method of evaluation are more valid because of the continuous feedback of student's performance, whereas others were of the opinion that the methods of evaluation in both the systems are equally valid.
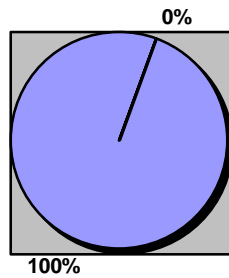
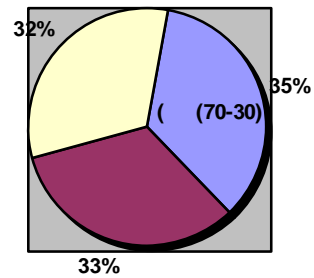## Q#7-Modes of Evaluation improves the standard of Education

Annual System

Semester System

25%

22%

53%

- yes
- no
- depends

11%

19%

70%

- yes
- no
- depends
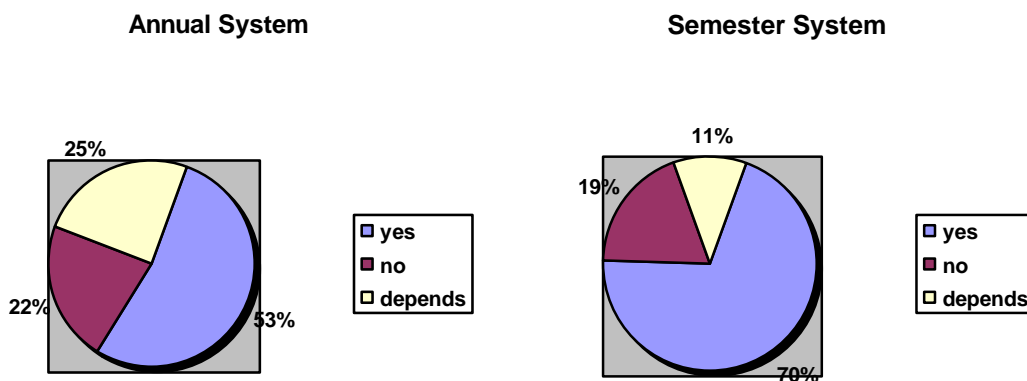
The percentages show that modes of evaluation of Semester System help a lot in improving the standard of education as compared to Annual System.

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Q#8-Percentage of the subjective and objective type questions in the paper

Annual System
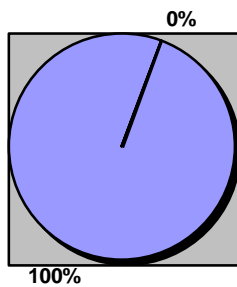
Semester System

0%

yes
no

100%

32%

35%

((70-30)

33%

In Annual System, the paper is 100% subjective whereas in Semester System a fixed portion of the process of evaluation is devoted to objective type questions, which gives the idea of students understanding in a better way. It may also depend on the subject being taught.

Q#9-Criteria for paper setup

Annual System

Semester System

0%

yes
no

100%

33%

yes
no

67%
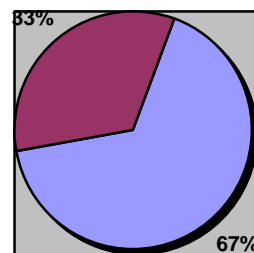
In Annual System the teachers have the criteria for paper setup set by the university. They have to follow that set pattern, whereas in Semester System the setup varies from subject to subject.

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Q#10-Comprehension based questions

Annual System
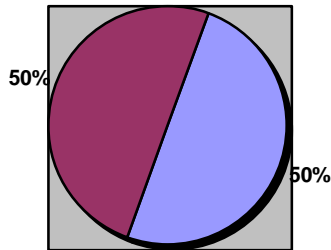
Semester System

50% · 50% (yes / no)	18% · 82% (yes / no)

Over all the result shows that the teachers prefer to give comprehension-based questions in the paper. In Semester System the percentage is higher because the whole system is more comprehension based and student centered. The reason for negative result is that some of the students want prepared material.

Data Analysis of the Student Zone

Q#1-Time period for the preparation of exams

Annual System

Semester System

|	
36% · 64% (yes / no)	58% · 42% (yes / no)

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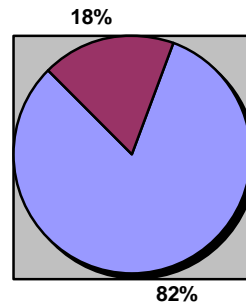A Comparative Study of the Evaluation System of Semester System and Annual System   121
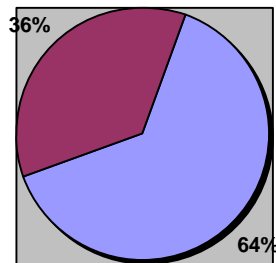
In Semester System only 42.3% students said that they are satisfied with the time period given to them for the preparation of exams, whereas in Annual System 64% shows the satisfaction of the students as far as the time period for the preparation of the exams is concerned.

Q#2-Chance to look at the marking

Annual System   **Semester System**

In Semester System 92.3 % students said that they don't get a chance to look at the marking, whereas in Annual System 80 % of the students said that they can't see their papers easily. They have to make special request to the university. The result shows that both the systems don't give the opportunity to the students to see their papers. However in Semester System the students get the idea of their marks in the forms of presentation and assessment test whereas in Annual System there is not even this probability.

Q#3-Comprehension based questions in the paper.

Annual System   **Semester System**

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Over all the result shows that the students prefer to have comprehension-based questions in the paper. In Semester System the percentage is higher, i.e., 80.77% because the whole system is more comprehension based and student centered. The reason for negative result is that some of the students want prepared material.

Q#4-Satisfaction or motivation with grading system
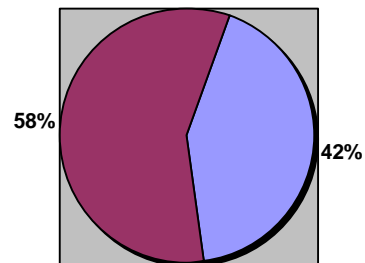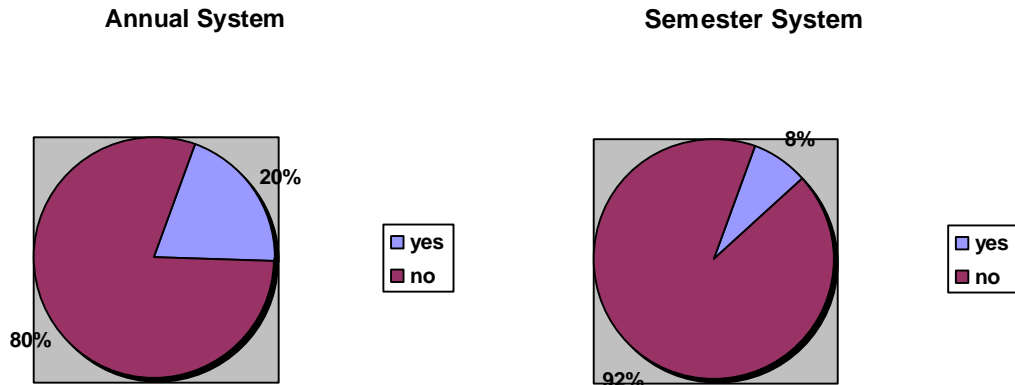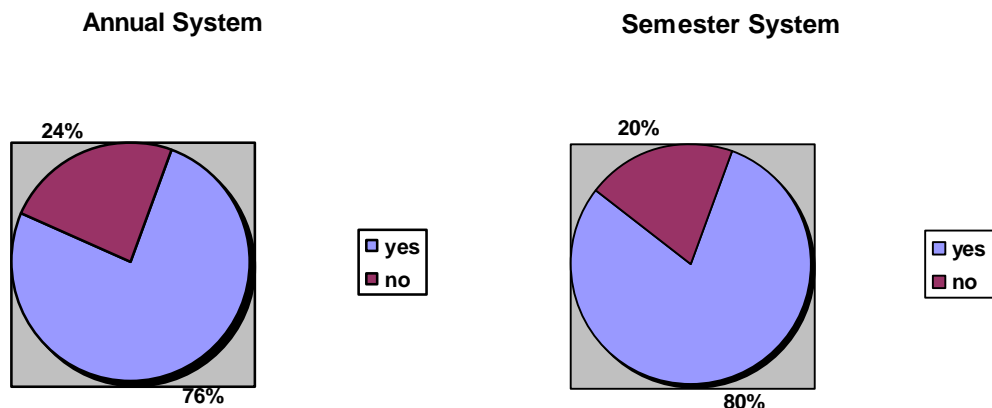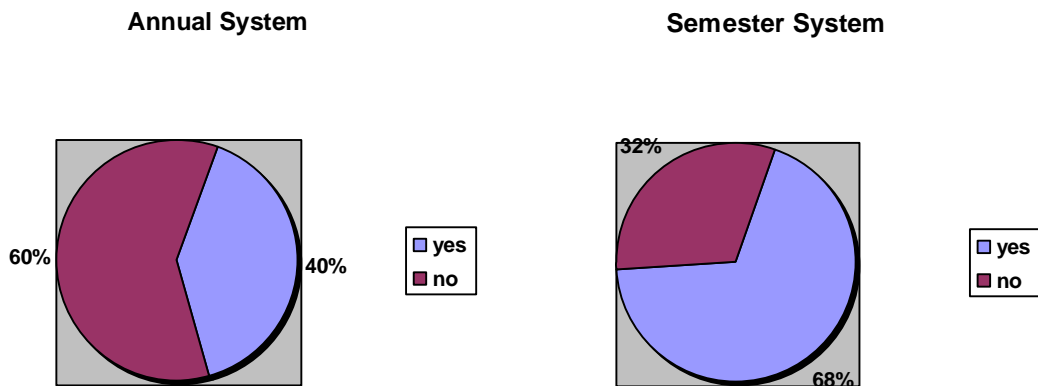
Annual System

Semester System

24%

76%

- yes
- no

46%

54%

- yes
- no
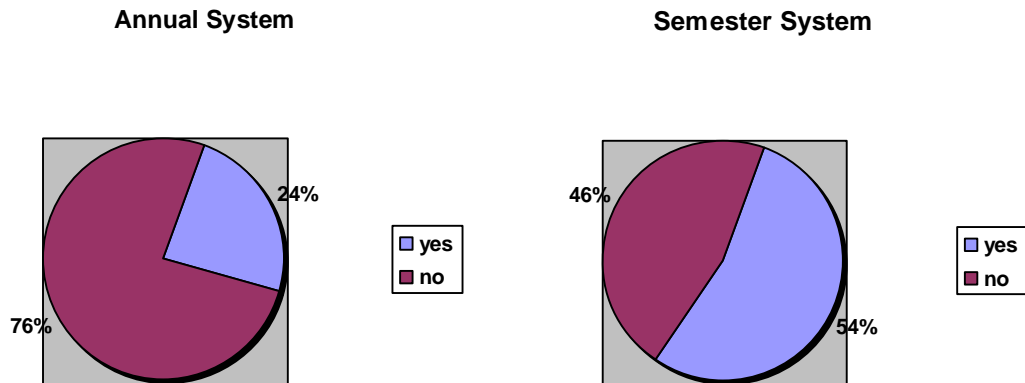
It is observed that in Semester System majority was satisfied with the grading system whereas in Annual System majority is not satisfied. This shows that the Semester System provides satisfactions to the students which helps in motivating them .The reason is that in Semester System the students get more marks because of the modes of evaluation and the grading system.

Q#5-Stress due to work load

Annual System

Semester System

60%

40%

- yes
- no

32%

68%

- yes
- no

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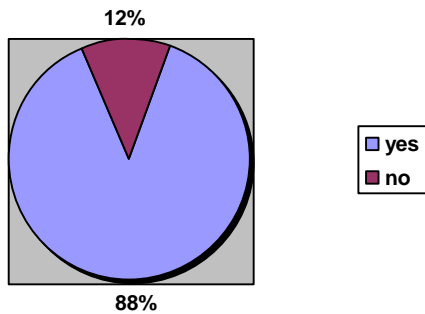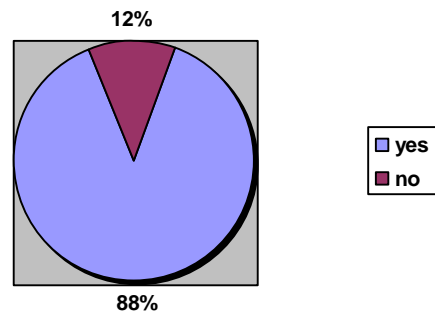
Students of the Annual System think that there is no special load on the students of Semester System. In their view the stress due to workload is equal on the students of both systems. Whereas the students of Semester System think that they are overburdened.

Q#6-Continuous feed back in Semester System

Annual System

12%

88%

yes
no

Semester System

12%

88%

yes
no

The students of both the systems were agreed upon the fact that Semester System provides continuous feedback of the students' performance, which is a plus point of the system.

Q#7-Similar grading system in both the systems

Annual System

32%

68%

yes
no

Semester System

40%

60%

yes
no
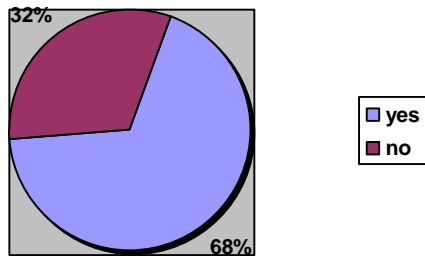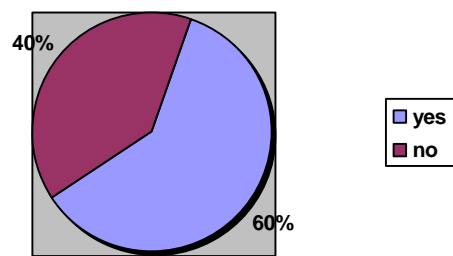
The majority of the students of both systems were of the view that there should be similar grading system because it helps in motivating the students as well as provides continuous feedback. Rest of the students were of the view that similar grading system is not possible because both the systems are not similar. The grading of semester system is more appreciable.

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Q#8-Validity of the Evaluation System

Annual System

Semester System

12%

88%

- yes
- no

9% 6%

85%

- yes
- no
- depends
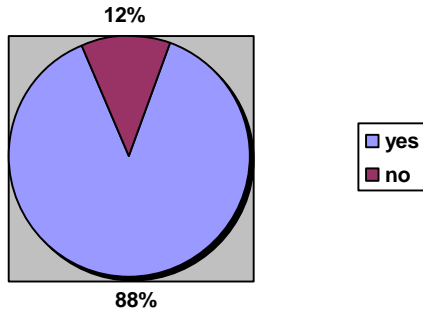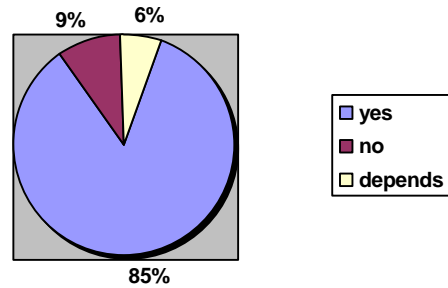
The majority of the students of both the systems agreed upon the fact that evaluation system of the semester system is more valid because of its modes and methods and better grading system.

Q#9-Modes of Evaluation improves the standard of Education

Annual System

Semester System

32%

68%

- yes
- no

12%

88%

- yes
- no
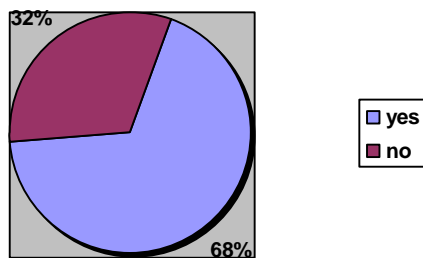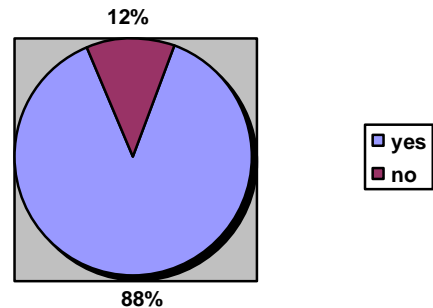
The students were agreed upon the fact that the modes of evaluation of Semester System plays a major role in the improvement of standard of education in Semester System as compared to Annual System whereas minority was of the opinion that other factors are equally or more important.

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Q#10-Percentage of the objective and subjective type questions in the paper
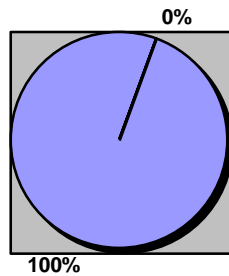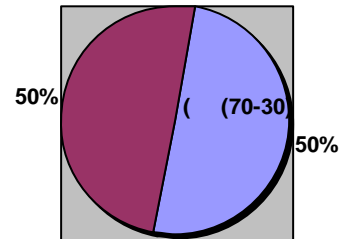
Annual System

Semester System

0%

yes
no

100%

50%

(70-30)

50%

In Annual System the paper is 100% subjective whereas in Semester System a fixed portion of the process of evaluation is devoted to objective type questions, which gives the idea of students understanding in a better way.

Conclusions

Student Zone

- Through data analysis of student zone we came to the conclusion that Semester system has some qualities regarding evaluation which are preferred over Annual system by the students of both Semester system and Annual system.

- Both systems are satisfied with the marking /grading system of Semester system.

- Quality of continuous feedback is appreciated by the students of both the systems.

- Students of both systems agreed upon the validity of evaluation system in Semester system and agreed that such system of evaluation can improve standard of education.

- Students of both the systems are of the view that Semester system provides better opportunity to comprehend and understand

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Faculty Zone

- Data analysis of faculty zone shows that the system of evaluation in Semester system is more appreciated by the faculty of both Semester and Annual systems
- Faculty of both the systems agreed upon the fact that grading/marking system of semester is better and the methods of evaluation are more valid as compared to Annual system.
- Faculty of both the systems appreciated the quality of Semester system that it not only provides continuous feedback of the students but also provides them better understanding
- It also improves standard of education.

Weakness

The only negative view from students and faculty of Annual and Semester system is that there is more stress and workload in Semester as compared to Annual System.

Recommendations

After the research it is recommended that:

1. Teachers should be given the liberty to recommend their own plan of evaluation because they are the better judges of the student's level of comprehension and mental capacity.
2. Continuous feedback from the students should be made possible to get better results.
3. Though completely similar grading system is not possible in both the systems however, Annual system should take the good qualities of the grading system of the Semester system.
4. It is observed that the modes of evaluation in Semester system are more valid as compared to Annual system and they help in improving the standard of education. So, the modes of evaluation of annual system should be reconsidered.
5. It is recommended that a particular portion of the paper in annual system should be fixed for the objective type questions to assure the better results.
6. It should be made sure that the paper consists of comprehension-based questions rather than memory based questions to improve the level of students learning. Evaluation

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process should be aimed at judging the critical faculty rather than the cramming ability of the students.

7. The process of paper setting process should be transparent and valid.

8. A proper standard should be maintained in paper setting and paper checking.

9. It is recommended that the results of both the systems should be available on net for the convenience of the students.

10. A sufficient weightage should be given to research work in every field because it gives a lot of opportunity of practical experience and exposure, which helps in the process of learning.

11. Students should be allowed to see their papers so that they can improve their flaws and mistakes.

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Appendix A
Questionnaire for the Faculty Members

Sr.no	Questions	Yes	No	Depends
Q#1	Do you get a chance to device your own plan of evaluation?			
Q#2	Do you think that there is more stress on the students of Semester system as compared to Annual system?			
Q#3	Do you think that Semester system provides continuous feed back of the student's performance as compared to Annual system?			
Q#4	Do you think that there should be similar grading system in both Semester system as well as Annual system?			
Q#5	Do you think that the grading system helps in motivating the students to perform better in Semester system as compared to Annual system?			
Q#6	Do you think that the methods of evaluation are more valid in Semester system as compared to Annual system?			
Q#7	Do you think that the modes of evaluation improve the standard of education in Semester system as compared to Annual system?			
Q#8	What is the percentage of subjective and objective type questions in the paper? (70—30),(80—20),(60---40), (50—50)			
Q#9	Do you have any criteria for paper set up?			
Q#10	Do you prefer to have comprehension based questions I your paper?			

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Appendix B

Questionnaire for the Students

Sr.no	Questions	Yes	No	Depends
Q#1	Do you get enough time for the preparation of exams?			
Q#2	Do you get a chance to look at the marking of your papers?			
Q#3	Does your paper consist of comprehension-based questions?			
Q#4	Are you satisfied with grading/marking system of the university/college?			
Q#5	Do you think that there is more stress on the students of semester system as compare to annual system?			
Q#6	Do you think that semester system helps in providing continuous feedback of the student's performance?			
Q#7	Do you think that there should be similar grading system in both semester system and annual system?			
Q#8	Do you think that the methods of evaluation are more valid in semester system as compare to annual system?			
Q#9	Do you think that the modes of evaluation improve the standard of education in semester system as compare to annual system?			
Q#10	What is the percentage of subjective and objective questions in your paper?(70—30) , (80—20), (60—40), (50—50)			

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Appendix C

Data collected from the Faculty Zone

Sr. no	Questions	Annual system			Semester system		
		Yes	No	D	Yes	No	D
Q#1	Own plan of evaluation	5%	95%		90%	10%	
Q#2	Stress due to work load	71%	25%	4%	66.6 %	33.3 %	
Q#3	Continuous feed back of the student's performance	75%	25%		58.3 %	41.6 %	
Q#4	Similar grading system	75%	20%	5%	15%	80%	5%
Q#5	Motivation due to grading system	80%	14%	6%	95%	3%	2%
Q#6	Validity of the modes of evaluation in semester system as compared to biannual system	75%	25%		67%	25%	8%
Q#7	Improvement of the standard of education due to the modes of evaluation	53%	22%	25%	70%	19%	11%
Q#8	Percentage of subjective and objective type questions.	100% subj			35% (60-40) 33% (70-30)		32%
Q#9	Criteria for paper set up.	100%			67%	33%	
Q#10	Comprehension based questions	50%	50%		82%	18%	

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Appendix D

Data collected from the Student Zone

Sr. no	Questions	Annual system			Semester system		
		Yes	*No*	*D*	Yes	No	D
Q#1	Time period for preparation of exams	64%	36%		42.3 %	57.7 %	
Q#2	Chance to look at the marking	20%	80%		7.69 %	92.3 %	
Q#3	Comprehension based questions	76%	24%		80%	20%	
Q#4	Satisfaction or motivation with grading system	24%	76%		53.8 %	46.2 %	
Q#5	Stress due to work lode	40%	60%		68.3	31.7 %	
Q#6	Continuous feed back in semester system	88%	12%		88.4 %	11.6 %	
Q#7	Similar grading system in both the system	68%	32%		60%	40%	
Q#8	Validity of the evaluation system	88%	12%		85%	9.4%	6%
Q#9	Mode of evaluation improves the standard of education	68%	32%		88%	12%	
Q#10	Percentage of objective and subjective type questions	100% subj			50% (70-30) 40% (60-40)		10%

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Nadia Ghaffar, M.A. English, B.Ed.
Visiting Faculty
Foundation University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Fatimah Jinnah Women University
Pakistan. nadia.ghaffar@yahoo.com

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