

# PERCEPTION STUDY OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS REGARDING THE FUNCTIONALITY OF SEMESTER SYSTEM IN AGRICULTURE

N.Pokharel\*, M. Jaishi and S.Subedi

Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science, Lamjung Campus

narendrapokharel12@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

*The study was conducted in two constituents and two affiliated colleges of Tribhuvan University with objective to study the perception of students and teachers towards curriculum, syllabus and regularity of classes, and teaching method. Self-structured questionnaire was administered for the collection of data and collected data was analyzed through using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The study revealed that 65% students were satisfied with relevance of curriculum while 49% showed their dissatisfaction with provision of co-curricular activities and 55% with provision of seminars and tutorials in the syllabus. The study further revealed that 75% of students are dissatisfied with the course coverage in stipulated time and 89% with regularity of the classes. Similarly, the perception of students' towards domain knowledge and teaching method adopted by teachers is satisfactory. The 68% students expressed their satisfaction with interactive behavior of teachers inside the classroom and 71% were satisfied with use of ICT and audio visual aids, however 66% students showed their dissatisfaction with the regularity and punctuality of the teachers. The study also revealed that the majority of the students seldom use library with less than ten hours during a semester. In this way, the findings of the study suggested the urge of developing strategies by all the stakeholders to make semester system effective which have a direct impact on student's achievement.*

Keywords: Curriculum, Domain knowledge, Perception, Semester system, Teaching method

## 1. Introduction

Tribhuvan University (TU), which was established in 1959, is the first national institution of higher education in Nepal. There are 39 central departments and 4 research centers in TU. Currently TU is operating all the central departments except central department of law under the semester system. ([www.tribhuvan-university.edu.np](http://www.tribhuvan-university.edu.np))

Different educational institutions and universities practices different academic and examination system across the world. At present, most of the universities and educational institute has

adopted semester system. Semester system is not an education system only but an education system which focuses on learning over teaching and whose approach is learner centered over teacher centered. The main aim of semester system is to give emphasis on in-depth, continuous and comprehensive learning aiming to produce best qualified product by developing required attitude, skill and knowledge.

Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS) was established back in 1972 with the mission to promote agricultural science and to train manpower for the agricultural development focusing on teaching, research and dissemination of agricultural technologies ([www.iaas.edu.np](http://www.iaas.edu.np)). Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS), as constituent campus of Tribhuvan University is the pioneer and largest institution in the country which provides higher education in agriculture to the Nepalese as well as foreign students from around the world. An Institution at the beginning started its academic program from Jagadamba Bhawan at Kathmandu, Nepal and later it was shifted to Chitwan district in 1974. Since then the Institution has taken the sole responsibility of providing higher education in agriculture in Nepal.

Agriculture educational institutions have been operating semester systems for a long time worldwide, and in Nepal all the Universities are operating higher education in agriculture under semester system. The prevailing majority of teachers and administrative personnel studied under the annual system and were not formally trained to run semester system. IAAS introduce semester system almost a decade ago. This system is quite different in its philosophy, composition and implementation strategy. The system has been found very effective over annual system as it engages teachers and students both throughout the year in academic activities. Semester system gives more freedom and flexibility to the teachers in deciding teaching-learning activities ranging from designing the curriculum to the evaluation of the performance of students. As the main motto of semester system is learners progress through regular internal assessment, assignments and presentations, reduces the burden of examination at the end of the academic year. In annual system, evaluation is done at the end of the academic year which accesses factual but nor conceptual and creative capacities of the learners. According to Mirza (1999) annual system is mechanical learning which lacks accuracy and testability of the examination papers that merely meets the reliability of the curriculum. Lack of skill in paper setters makes examination papers dubious. In semester system there is well structured and logical division of syllabus extended to six months. Semester system has strong rationality as it focuses on multi stakeholder development i.e learners, teachers as well as curriculum. It works on Holy Trika i.e. Syllabi- faculty- students.

## **2. Methodology**

The study was conducted in two constituent college i.e. Lamjung Campus and Paklihawa Campus and two affiliated campus i.e. Prithu Technical college and Campus of Live Science of Tribhuvan University. The total sample of 100 students (25 students from each of the colleges) and 10 teachers were taken at random. The data required to meet the objectives were collected by administering two separate questionnaire for students and teachers prepared by researcher based on established procedures in literature. Same questionnaire were employed to both of the respondents with slight modification. The main questionnaire is sub- divided into five sub-

sections according to the pre-defined objectives. The first section i.e section-A focused on socio-demographic status of the students pursuing agriculture in higher study. Section – B focused on curriculum and contained five question revealing respondents' view and perception towards overall curriculum, its judicious distribution in each semester, provision of tutorials and seminars etc. Perception was studied by employing five point Likert response of strongly satisfied, satisfied, uncertain dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied. Section – C included two question regarding the students and teacher's satisfaction regarding the course coverage with in stipulated time and regularity of the classes and same five point Likert response mode was employed. Section-D includes seven items which focused on respondents' view on domain knowledge of the teachers (cognitive domain, perceptual domain and behavioral domain), regularity and punctuality of the teachers, attitude of the teachers, teaching method employed by teachers, use of ICT and audio visuals, and here also same five point Likert mode of response was employed. It is very important to mention here that only section B and section-C of the questionnaire was administered for the teachers. Similarly, Section-E was about the time spend by students in library. The information about library use was accessed on two different basis. One question was asked to find out the frequency of library visit by the students and another was to study the total time spend by students in library during a semester in hourly basis. It is very important to mention here that only section B and section-C of the questionnaire was administered for the teachers.

The collected data were analyzed through frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation by using the software SPSS

### **3. Result and Discussion**

#### **3.1. Teachers and Students Satisfaction with the curriculum**

A well-structured curriculum is fundamental for the successful operation of the semester system. The curriculum should be well coordinated to meet the objectives and emphasis should be given to overall development of student's personality incorporating sufficient co-curricular activities. For the effective implementation of the semester, every individual university must ensure the curriculum revision in every three years (Bhattacharya, K.G., 2011).

The result presented in table-1 showed that the overall perception of teachers and student's towards the curriculum is good. None of the students are strongly satisfied, 47% are satisfied, 18% are uncertain, 26% are dissatisfied and 9% are strongly dissatisfied with the item "satisfaction with the relevance of curriculum with present needs". When teachers are concerned for the same item, majority of the responses are found to be in positive direction with 20% strongly satisfied and 80% are satisfied. None of the respondents recorded their response as uncertain, dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied.

The perception of respondents towards the co-curricular activities in the curriculum is not quite satisfactory. None of the students recorded their response as strongly satisfied, 28% satisfied, 23% uncertain, 37% dissatisfied and 12% strongly dissatisfied, whereas the percentage of teacher with satisfaction is 0%, 50%, 20%, 30% and 0% respectively for strongly satisfied, satisfied, uncertain, dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied.

Regarding the perception of respondents towards the provision of project work and field study, it is found to be satisfactory, where 8% and 46 % students recorded their response as strongly satisfied and satisfied, 7% uncertain, 31% dissatisfied and 5% strongly dissatisfied. In case of teacher respondent, 30% are

strongly satisfied, 60% are satisfied and 10% are uncertain but none of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the item provision of project work and field study in the syllabus.

Perception of students towards the provision of seminar and tutorials in curriculum is not satisfactory, none of the respondents recorded their response as strongly satisfied, 27% are satisfied, 18% are uncertain, 38% are dissatisfied and 17% recorded their response as strongly dissatisfied. Regarding teacher's response 10%, 30%, 20% and 40% are strongly satisfied, satisfied, uncertain and dissatisfied but no one recorded their response as strongly dissatisfied.

On exploring the perception regarding curriculum distribution in each semester, the study revealed that 1%, 38%, 13%, 33% and 15% students expressed their views as strongly satisfied, satisfied, uncertain, dissatisfied and strongly satisfied respectively. So far the teachers response is concerned 30% are strongly satisfied, 40% are satisfied 10% are uncertain about the item distribution of curriculum in each semester. It is remarkable that 20% of the teachers are dissatisfied with the curriculum distribution in each semester. Thus, it can be said that aspects of co-curricular activities, seminars and tutorials and distribution of course contents in each semester need a fresh thought and attention for proper functionality of the semester system.

### **3.2. Teachers and Students Satisfaction with the Course coverage and regularity of the classes**

Course coverage and regularity of the classes are directly interlinked with each other. In semester system, course duration is provided in terms of credit hour and there is no question of non-coverage of course if classes are run regularly matched with academic calendar. There is no concept of missing classes in semester system until there is unavoidable reasons and if classes are missed students should back-up themselves in consultation of teachers.

The table-2 depicts that the majority of the students expressed their dissatisfaction with the item "course coverage on stipulated time". Only 1% respondents are strongly satisfied, and 19% are satisfied with the course coverage in stipulated time whereas 5% are uncertain, 48% are dissatisfied and 27% are strongly dissatisfied satisfied with the item course coverage in stipulated time. Regarding the teachers response, 60% are strongly satisfied 30% are satisfied and 10% remained neutral regarding the item course coverage in stipulated time.

Regarding the regularity of the classes, again majority of the responses from students are in negative side. Only 2% students are strongly satisfied and only 5% students are satisfied where as 4% are uncertain, 41% are dissatisfied and 48% are strongly dissatisfied with the item regularity of the classes. On exploring the teachers perception towards the regularity of the classes 30% are strongly satisfied, 30% are satisfied and 10% expressed their view as dissatisfied. Interestingly 30% of the teachers prefer not to comment anything else regarding the item regularity of the classes.

### **3.3. Students Satisfaction with the Teachers and Teaching method**

The success of semester system largely depends upon the competency and motivation of faculty members, their professional ethics, punctuality and regularity in the class room, the method of teaching they employ, ability of teachers to use ICT and audio visual aids and so on. Table-3 revealed that students expressed their satisfaction with the domain knowledge of teachers. Regarding the item "Cognitive domain" of teachers, 5% are strongly satisfied, 67% of the respondents are satisfied while 24% prefer not to comment upon the cognitive domain of the teachers. Very small number of respondent's i.e. only 4% are dissatisfied and no respondents are strongly dissatisfied with the cognitive domain of the teachers. On exploring the perception of respondents upon the perceptual domain none of the respondents are

strongly satisfied, 46% are satisfied while 25% and 1% students gave their response as dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied. A large portion i.e. 28% keep themselves away from giving any comment upon perceptual domain of the teachers. Similarly, regarding the Behavioral domain 4% are strongly satisfied, 57% are satisfied, 26% are uncertain, 11% are dissatisfied and 2% expressed their view as strongly dissatisfied.

As regularity and punctuality of the teachers are concerned, 4% are strongly satisfied and another 20% are satisfied. 10 % of students expressed their view as neutral in this regard whereas 45% and 21% students showed their response as dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied respectively.

The perception of students towards the teacher’s attitude is in positive direction. 2% are strongly satisfied while another 55% are satisfied. 19% students expressed their view as neutral while 18% and 6% are dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied respectively.

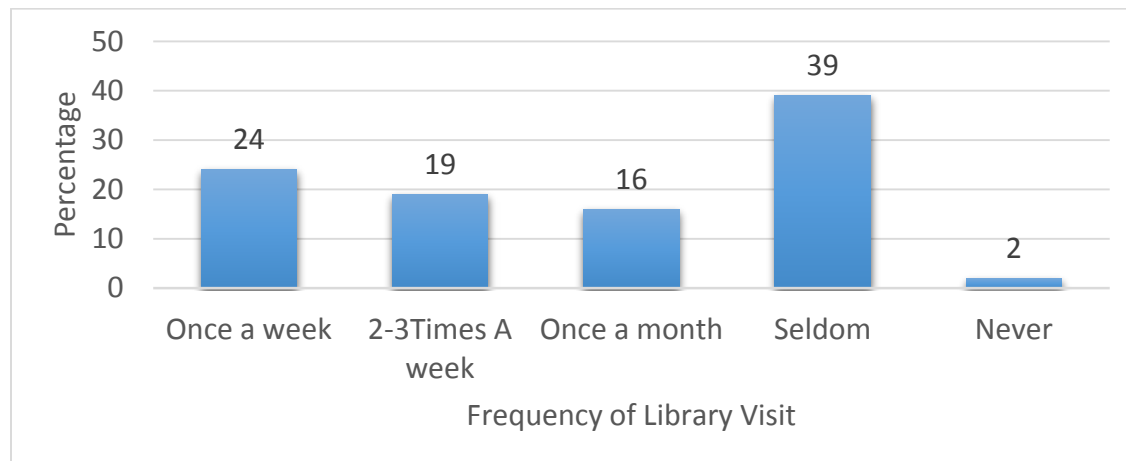
Accessibility and availability of teachers for students both inside and outside the class room is very important in semester system. The perusal of the table-3 showed that 3% students are strongly satisfied and 35% are satisfied in this regard while 24% prefer to remain neutral. Large number i.e. 32% and 6% expressed their view as dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied.

Diversity in teaching and learning process is also an important factor influence the overall functioning of the semester system. So far the diversified method of teaching and learning is concerned, it is found that 1% students are strongly satisfied and another 40% are satisfied. Out of total respondents 15% keep themselves away from giving any comment, whereas 26% are dissatisfied and 8% are strongly dissatisfied teaching methodology adopted by teachers.

However the interaction is two way process, the perception of students towards the item interactive behavior of the teachers is in positive side where 4% students are strongly satisfied while 64% are satisfied in this regards. It is found that 13% keeps neutral in this regard while 18% and 1% are dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied with the interactive behavior of the teachers.

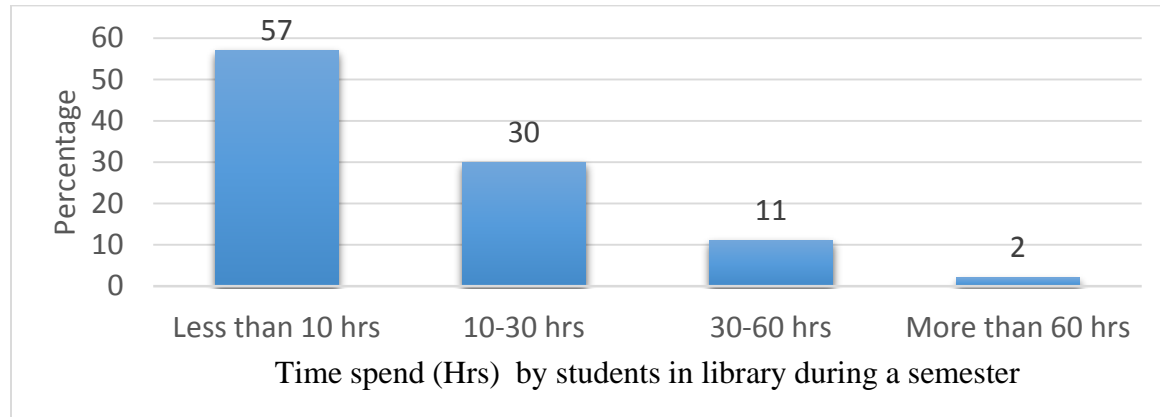
Similarly, the table-3 depicts that majority of students responded positively to the item “Use of audio visuals aids in teaching and learning process”. It is found that 9% students are strongly satisfied and 62% are satisfied while 8% preferred to remain neutral in this regard. Similarly, 13% of students are dissatisfied and 8% are strongly dissatisfied with the item use of audio visuals aids in teaching and learning process.

### 3.4. Frequency of library visit by Students time spend by students in library



The result revealed that library using trend of students have been decreased drastically. It is found that 24% students visit library once a week, 19% visit 2-3 times a week, 16% visit library once a month while 39% of the students said that they seldom visit library. It's shocking that 2% of students have never visited library till the final semester of their study.

### 3.4. Time spend by students in library



Similarly, on studying the another dimension of library use i.e. time spend by students in library during a semester in hourly basis 57% students said that they spend less than 10 hours in library, 30% spends 10-30 hours in library, 11% spends 30-60 hours and only 2% of the students spends more than 60 hours.

On exploring the reason behind not using library, most of the students think that availability of very precise hand note which cover most of the syllabus is the major reason behind not visiting library. Similarly, the unavailability of books as per the syllabus and access to internet is another reason for less attraction to library.

## 4. Conclusion

The result and discussion revealed a detail picture of how students and teachers perceive towards different dimension of semester system. The result revealed that significant number of students as well as teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the provision of project work, field study, seminars and tutorials. Likewise, huge number of students i.e. 75% students expressed their dissatisfaction with course coverage in stipulated time and 89% of them are not satisfied with the regularity of the classes. Surprisingly, 30% of the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the regularity of the classes while 30% of them prefer not to comment anything else regarding this item. Another area that needs immediate improvement as identified by this study is regularity and punctuality of teachers. Most of the expressed their satisfaction with the domain knowledge of teachers and use of ICT and audio-visuals aids in the teaching and learning process. Similarly, the study also depicted that the library using behavior of the students have been drastically reduced.

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