

CHAPTER VI :FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

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## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The University Grants Commission states that -

"Introduction of the Semester, if done in a coordinated and systematic manner, is likely to initiate a process of modernization and improvement in both the teaching and learning process, apart from bringing about the needed reform and flexibility in course content and techniques of evaluation."\*

It was in the 60's that the introduction of the Semester System in a few universities in India came about with a wide variation in the mode of its applicability and at present there are more than 30 university institutions which have adopted the system in one form or the other. The university of Madras is one of them and it has done so under the operative programme of examination reform of the UGC known as 'action programme'. For the greater part, however, the introduction of the Semester System at the undergraduate level is just getting under way. But a change of Calendar from its traditional yearly examination system to a bi-yearly examination system or 'Semester System' involves a number of administrative, psychological, and sociological problems on the solution of which depends the success of the Semester System. The present research undertaken in this background is

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\* University Grants Commission : Principles and Mechanics of the Semester System, 1971, p.2; Rais Ahmed.

expected to help in building up a coherent conceptual plan for the implementation of the Semester System with a clearer understanding of the positive side as well as the problems that are likely to arise.

The overall purpose of the study is to examine critically the perceptions of the college teaching communities in Madras about the desirability and feasibility of introducing Semester System in their colleges and to ascertain whether or not their perceptions in this regard are influenced by their biographical and institutional background especially in regard to 'Institutional Climate', 'Teacher Morale', 'Leadership Behaviour' and 'Dogmatism'.

The investigation made use of seven different tools of which the Semester System perception Description Questionnaire used for measuring the perceptions of college teachers about Semester System was framed and standardised by the investigator himself adopting the Likert method of attitude scale construction. Besides this, the proforma for collecting information about the institutions and its staff studied were composed by the investigator. The rest of the tools used for studying the Institutional Climate, Teacher Morale, Leadership Behaviour, and Dogmatism were standardised tools already validated and tested in the Faculty of Education and Psychology, M.S. University of Baroda.

A sample of 500 teachers drawn at random from the teaching communities of the University Departments, Affiliated Colleges, and Autonomous Institutions in the city of Madras formed the subjects of the study.

The major findings and their implications are presented in the following sections.

## 6.2 MAJOR FINDINGS

### (A) Perceptions about Semester System

(i) The perceptions of the college teaching communities of Madras about the desirability and feasibility of introducing Semester System in their colleges have been studied in respect of the following components of Semester System.

- |                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| a. Concept        | f. Evaluation          |
| b. Philosophy     | g. Learning            |
| c. Curriculum     | h. Organization        |
| d. Teaching       | i. Plant and Equipment |
| e. Class strength |                        |

It has been found that the college teaching communities in Madras perceive the Semester System in its components visualised, more a desirable proposition than a feasible one for adoption in their colleges.

(ii) Nevertheless there are certain components of the

Semester System which they consider as equally desirable and feasible. They are in order of importance :

- (a) Class strength
- (b) Organization
- (c) Concept.

(iii) The component 'Plant and Equipment' is perceived as desirable but not feasible.

(iv) The college teachers perceive less favourably the desirability and feasibility of the following components :

- (a) Learning
- (b) Philosophy
- (c) Teaching
- (d) Evaluation
- (e) Curriculum.

(B) Perceptions Institution-wise

(i) A comparative study of the perceptions of the teachers of Affiliated Colleges of the University of Madras, University Departments (teaching), and Autonomous Institutions reveals the fact that the teachers of the Autonomous Institutions perceive the Semester System more favourably than the teachers of the University Departments and Affiliated Colleges.

(ii) As between the teachers of University Departments and Affiliated Colleges, the former view Semester System more

favourably than the latter. The gap of perception in this respect, however, is not so significant as that between the teachers of Autonomous Institutions and the University Departments indicating that the teachers of Affiliated Colleges and University Departments are closer to each other in their visualization of Semester System than to those of the Autonomous Institutions.

(iii) An analysis of their perceptions component-wise shows that in spite of institutional differences there is similarity of views among the three types of teaching communities in respect of four out of the nine components of Semester System visualised in this study. They are as follows:

(a) 'Concept', and 'Organization' perceived as both desirable and feasible for adoption.

(b) 'Teaching', and 'Curriculum' perceived as not so desirable and feasible for adoption.

(iv) In respect of the other five components the teachers of the three types of institutions have differing views as stated below.

(a) Class-Strength : The teachers of Affiliated Colleges and University Departments perceive 'class-strength' as desirable and feasible whereas the teachers of Autonomous Institutions perceive it as only desirable but less feasible.

(b) Evaluation : 'Evaluation' is perceived as less desirable and less feasible by the teachers of Affiliated Colleges and University Departments whereas the same is perceived as desirable but less feasible by the teachers of the Autonomous Institutions.

(c) Plant and Equipment : The teachers of the Autonomous Institutions and University Departments are identical in perceiving 'plant and Equipment' as both desirable and feasible. The affiliated college teachers, however, perceive 'plant and equipment' as desirable but less feasible.

(d) Philosophy : In regard to 'philosophy' the teachers of both the Autonomous and University Departments perceive it to be both 'desirable and feasible'. But the teachers of Affiliated Colleges perceive it as less desirable and feasible.

(e) Learning : 'Learning' is perceived by the teachers of the Affiliated Colleges and University Departments as feasible but less desirable. It is, however, perceived as less desirable and feasible by the teachers of Autonomous Institutions.

(C) Perceptions Faculty-wise

The faculties of Technology, Engineering, Veterinary Science, and Medicine perceive the adoption of Semester System favourably. On the other hand the faculties of Education, Law, Science, Arts, and Commerce view the adoption of Semester System less favourably.

(D) Perceptions hierarchy-wise :

(i) The top educational administrators of the University of Madras, the Directorate of Education, and the Autonomous Institutions perceive the Semester System both desirable and feasible for adoption by colleges, and their perceptions in this regard are significantly higher than those of other categories of educational administrators and teachers. The Heads of Departments of the institutions studied come next in this respect and they too consider it to be equally desirable and feasible.

(ii) As for principals, vice-Principals, and Professors, they perceive Semester System as desirable but not equally feasible.

(iii) The Lecturers, and the Tutors, and Demonstrators perceive Semester System as neither desirable nor feasible.

(E) Biographical Factors and Perceptions :

The biographical factors age, sex, academic qualification and teaching experience visualised in this study are found to influence the perceptions of the teachers about the semester System. Age and academic qualification have significant influence on the perception of teachers both about the desirability and feasibility of Semester System whereas sex and teaching experience have significant influence on the

teachers' perception of desirability of Semester System only. A comparative study of the different categories of the above biographical variables gives to following findings :

(i) Age : The middle (31 to 40 years) and upper middle (41 to 50 years) age groups show significantly favourable attitude in their perception of the desirability and feasibility of Semester System whereas the old (51 to 60 years) and young (20 to 30 years) age groups show a less favourable attitude in this regard.

(ii) Academic qualification : The professional degree holders have been found to perceive the Semester System favourably both in respect of the desirability and feasibility whereas the Master's and Ph.D. degree holders exhibit a less favourable attitude.

(iii) Sex : Sex-wise there is no significant difference in the teachers' perception about the desirability of Semester System but as regards the feasibility of Semester System, the men are found to be more positive about it than women.

(iv) Teaching Experience : In Middle (11 to 15 years) and upper middle (16 to 20 years) teaching experience groups show a more favourable attitude to the desirability and feasibility of Semester System whereas the lower (1 to 5 years), lower middle (6 to 10 years) and high (20 years and above) teaching experience groups show a less favourable attitude.

(F) Perception of Interrèationship among components :

The college teaching communities perceive the components of Semester System visualised in the study as significantly interrèlated, there being only one exception namely 'Class-strength' which is perceived as related to the feasibility of 'evaluation'.

(G) Perception of Problems

In regard to their perceptions of the problems of adopting Semester System, the teaching communities perceive problems in relation to all the components of Semester System with the exception of 'class-strength'.

(H) Relationship Between teachers' perception and Institutional Climate

(i) Type-wise namely, 'open climate', 'Intermediate climate' and 'Closed climate', the Institutional Climate of the institutions studied shows no relationship to the perceptions of the college teaching communities about Semester System. A dimension-wise study, however, shows the following relationship.

(ii) The teaching communities perceive problems in introducing Semester System in institution where there prevail in the institutional climate 'hindrance', 'aloofness', and 'production emphasis', and the lack of 'freedom and democratization', 'intimacy', 'esprit' and 'communication'.

(iii) 'Thrust' as an open climate dimension has been found to be an important factor influencing the perceptions of the teaching communities about the desirability and feasibility of adopting Semester System. The more 'thrust' there is in the institutional climate, the more favourably do the teaching communities perceive the desirability and feasibility of Semester System.

(iv) Likewise, 'production emphasis', a closed climate dimension, is found to have significant negative influence on the perceptions of the teaching communities about Semester System.

(v) The feasibility of the component 'curriculum' of a Semester System has been perceived by the teaching communities as having positive relationship to the open climate dimensions 'intimacy', 'thrust', 'human relations' and 'freedom and democratization', and negative relationship to the closed climate dimensions 'hindrance' and 'production emphasis'.

(I) Relationship between teachers' perception and Teacher Morale

(i) Category-wise, Teacher Morale shows no significant relationship to the perception of college teaching communities about Semester System but dimension-wise it shows the following relationships which are significant enough.

(ii) The teacher morale dimensions namely 'Teacher Welfare', 'Relations', 'Need Satisfaction', 'Job Satisfaction' and 'Security', are found to be positive influencing factors in regard to the perceptions of teachers about the desirability and feasibility of 'philosophy', 'curriculum' and 'Teaching' of the Semester System.

(iii) Lack of 'cohesion' among the teachers is perceived by the teaching communities as a contributory factor to problems faced in introducing Semester System.

(J) Relationship between teachers' perception and Leadership Behaviour

(i) The Leadership Behaviour patterns as such do not show any relationship to the perceptions of teachers about the desirability and feasibility of the Semester System but they do show very significant relationship to the problems of introducing Semester System perceived by the teaching communities.

(ii) Dimension-wise, the 'initiating structure' dimension of Leadership Behaviour is found to show significant relationship to the perceptions of the teaching communities about the desirability and feasibility of Semester System.

(iii) Lack of 'Consideration' in the Leadership Behaviour is perceived by the teachers as a responsible factor in problems faced in introducing Semester System.

(K) Relationship between teachers' perception and 'Dogmatism'

Dogmatism is found to show no significant relationship to the perceptions of teaching communities about the desirability of Semester System, but in respect of feasibility and problems of Semester System, it shows very significant relationship.

(L) Basic Factors Identified

By using a computer programme, the following basic factors have been extracted and identified in the perceptions of the college teaching communities.

(i) Semester System Acceptance (Varimax Factor I):

The college teaching communities accept the concept, structure, and organization of the Semester System as a desirable proposition for adoption in their institutions.

(ii) Teacher-Student Interaction (Varimax Factor II):

The college teaching communities perceive the Semester System as providing opportunities for better class-room learning situation in terms of better teacher-student interaction and effective learning.

(iii) Democratic Faculty Organization (Varimax Factor III)

In adopting Semester System, a democratic set-up of faculty organization is perceived as a desirable step by the college teaching communities.

(iv) Plant and Equipment Organization (Varimax Factor IV)

The college teaching communities perceive the desirability of effective organization of the plant and equipment.

facilities for instructional and learning purposes in adopting Semester System in their institutions.

(v) Operational Climate Problems (Varimax Factor V) :

'Closed Climate' pattern of organizational climate conditions are perceived by the college teaching communities as posing operational problems in the working of the Semester System.

(vi) Sound Learning (Varimax Factor VI ): The college teaching communities perceive the possibility of sound learning in adopting Semester System.

(vii) Interpersonal Problems (Varimax Factor VII) :

The college teaching communities perceive interpersonal problems in terms of low morale, dogmatism, and lack of consideration in the leadership behaviour of principals and Heads of Departments as besetting the adoption of Semester System in their institutions.

(viii) Initiating Structure Expectancy (Varimax Factor VIII)

The college teaching communities expect the principals and Heads of Departments to provide leadership and take initiative in the matter of establishing well defined pattern of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure for the successful adoption of Semester System.

### 6.3 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The aforesaid findings have their implications to the various practical aspects of Semester System followed in the colleges in Madras. Hence, it is hoped, a discussion of the results would help in providing a theoretical frame of reference that may be useful in getting a correct perspective of the existing situation in the semesterisation of the courses, and in moving towards the full realization of the objectives of introducing the Semester System. In discussing the results of the investigation and their implications, the investigator has used the eight varimax factors identified in the study as the focal points.

#### A. THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic calendar is the major element in the frame work of organising the academic activity appropriate to the educational goals or methods envisaged in an educational system. The duration of an academic programme, the class exposure time, the number of courses a student takes, flexibility that accommodates variations in curricula and teaching, vacation, and the administrative facility of the programme are aspects dependent upon the academic calendar. It affects every one and hence all are interested in it.

"Semester System Acceptance", the most important factor

identified in the study shows that the teaching communities in Madras have accepted in principle the concept, structure, and organization of the Semester type of academic calendar in all its forms as a desirable proposition for adoption in their colleges. This could be considered a major break-through in the mental orientation of the teaching communities in the change over in the calendar pattern from the traditional term system of the British model to the Semester System now being effected.

#### Academic Aspects Poorly perceived

Notwithstanding the fact that the teaching communities in Madras have come to accept the semester pattern of academic calendar as a desirable proposition their perception of the feasibility of it is comparatively poor. This could naturally be so since the teaching communities have not yet gained

adequate experience with the Semester System, and more so, because of the fact that they had not been properly oriented about the concept and modalities of the Semester System before its introduction. The teaching communities of autonomous institutions like Indian Institute of Technology, and professional colleges like <sup>the</sup> college of Engineering where the Semester System is being practised much longer than in University Departments and Affiliated Colleges, have shown significantly a better and positive perception of Semester System than the latter. In this context it is hoped that the following hints about some of the salient practical aspects of Semester System may be of use to the practitioner.

#### Semester Teaching

In the Semester System "the teacher assumes a new role with regard to teaching and evaluation. Besides the teacher being responsible for total instructional work, he concomitantly evaluates his own methodology of teaching in terms of various instructional objectives. On the basis of these twin needs the teacher would require to make his methods of teaching and evaluation more scientific."\*

Semester courses lend themselves to a difference in treatment more readily than the old ones. Since however,

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\* M.S.Yadav and M. Mukhopadhyaya, "College Teaching in Semester System" The Education Quarterly, Vol. XXVIII, No.1, April, 1966, p.14.

deadlines have to be met, the teaching schedule should be planned with reference to specific dates of the academic calendar. The following suggestions may be helpful in implementing Semester Teaching.\*

1. Objectives of the course must be spelled out. This would help in organising the class-room experience to secure maximum results.

2. The teacher should plan for classes in advance. Weekly programming for semester courses indicating the week, hour, topic discussed, and reading and internal assessment may be done. Such programming would help in a judicious distribution of the work load in the course over the full teaching period and it would also serve as a self-regulating and self-discipline mechanism.

3. Modern tools and techniques of communication should be used.

4. Innovative approaches to teaching should be tried. Monitored discussion, interdisciplinary class encounter, seminar, and illustrated lecture are some of the pertinent approaches to Semester teaching.

5. The library habit should be encouraged by giving reading assignments. Term paper or written tutorial work

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\* Adopted from : Manorama Barnahas, Undergraduate Education under Semester System, Journal of Higher Education, UGC, Vol.2, No.3, Spring 1977, pp.329-339.

would help in cultivating reading habits in students.

6. The Independent Study Programme may be used as a training ground for the students in the methodology of research.

7. A feedback system must be made possible so that periodic and rigorous review of methods of teaching and programme schedule can become a regular exercise or feature.

8. A cell might be established which devotes itself to problems and challenges, arising out of semester teaching.

#### Evaluation in Semester System

The purpose of evaluation in a semester system is stated by the UGC this way :

.... evaluation should become a continuous process... the purpose... is not to increase the frequency of examinations or to supplement the final examination by mid-term examinations. The main purpose is to integrate teaching and evaluation and to test these skills and abilities which cannot be evaluated through a written examination at the end of a term or course. For this purpose internal assessment should be properly diversified so that through it we can list the writing ability of the student, his capacity to do field work or project work or laboratory practicals, his participation in seminars, tutorials etc. his grasp of the subject through his ability to write synopses of articles in learned journals, review

reference books and use source materials etc... it is not meant to endorse discipline. Its purpose is entirely academic to encourage students to apply themselves assiduously to their studies...\*

In the Semester System the evaluation of students is done by the teacher who teaches the subject, hence it is fully internal, and external examinations have no place. In the autonomous institutions like the IIT the evaluation is done fully internally. In the affiliated colleges the credits given to the course is divided between internal and external assessment, the proportion being 20%:80% at the undergraduate level and 40%:60% at the post-graduate level. Then comes the problem of wide variation of marks between internal and external assessment of students. As a solution to this problem the UGC has recommended the adoption of seven point grading scale.\*\* In the Poona University, it is required that there should not be a variation of more than 15% between the internal and external assessment marks.

The ultimate goal, however, should be to make the evaluation of students fully internal, only then would the purpose of introducing Semester System could be fully served. The affiliated colleges should, therefore, prepare

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\* H.J. Taylor, "The Combination of Internal Assessment with Examination Results" University Grants Commission: A Report of Examination Reform, 162, pp.89-96.

\*\* University Grants Commission. Examination Reform, 1978, pp.32-35.

itself for an autonomous status and to make evaluation fully internal in line with the principles and spirit of Semester System.

#### Some modes of Internal Assessment

In planning an evaluation schedule two principles should be borne in mind. Firstly, it must be sufficiently diversified to test the diverse abilities of students and secondly, internal assessment must be continuous and should be distributed over the full period of semester schedule. Some modes of evaluation are suggested below :

1. Short answer tests/objective tests - both announced and unannounced. These are ideal for use in the weekly schedule for testing knowledge of terms, concepts, etc.

2. Written tutorial work based on assigned readings. A sub-topic from the syllabus may be selected for this purpose.

3. The Term paper : A longer critical essay on an allied topic not specifically found in the syllabus.

4. Participation in group discussion, seminar etc.

5. An independent study project with a theme the student himself selects.

6. Laboratory and practical work.

7. Reports of a study trip.

8. Class attendance.

9. Oral or Viva-Voce examination.

10. 'Open Book' type examination.

### Curriculum :

A look at the college curricula obtaining in Madras would show that the structure of the course of studies remain the same as before except that they have been split into two parts to suit the bi-yearly examinations of the Semester System. They are not formed into self-contained units with the credit hours, and the prerequisites and the allied requirements prescribed. This precludes the possibility of interdisciplinary approach and flexibility in the selection and teaching of content of studies. Hence the redevelopment of courses to suit semesterisation becomes an imperative need.

### B. TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

Another factor identified in the perceptions of the teaching communities in this investigation is 'Teacher-student Interaction' according to which the Semester System is perceived by the college teachers as providing great scope for teacher-student interaction in the class-room. As a matter of fact the instruction in a class-room may be understood essentially as an interactive process wherein the teacher and the learner participate in a reciprocal manner. The broad types of relationships between a teacher and his student as normally understood are :

1. Authoritarian, where the teacher exercises a firm, centralized control. He closely directs every action of his

students who are passive receivers of instruction and information.

2. Laissez-Fairs, where the teacher leaves students on their own. Here, it is not the teacher but students who decide what they want to do and how they would do it. The teacher does not provide any leadership.

3. Democratic, where the teacher plays the role of a democratic group leader. He leads the students in the study of significant problems in the area in which he is teaching. There is always scope in such a classroom for the prevalence of friendly atmosphere, inter-change of ideas, and mutual respect between the teacher and the student.

There is close connection between the respective type of relationship of teacher and student and the relative amount of usage of it in the classroom.

The semester courses demands greater teacher-student involvement and accountability. For fourteen or eighteen weeks, the teacher who handles the course would find his or her ingenuity and creativity in the pursuit of knowledge, communication and excellence, challenged and tried, to be judged by peers and students alike.

Semester courses lend themselves to a difference in treatment more readily than the old ones. There is greater flexibility and greater scope for planning in a schedule

that is confined to specific date of the calendar, where deadlines have to be met.

#### Teaching-learning poorly perceived

It may be noted in this context that the college teaching communities of Madras notwithstanding their perception of teacher-student interaction in a Semester System, do not seem to have a proper perspective of the 'teaching' and 'learning' aspects of the Semester System as visualised in the study. The reasons are not far to seek. The college teachers except those coming from teacher-training colleges have not had any pedagogical training and consequently they cannot be expected to have a proper knowledge, and understanding of the teacher-learning process and its relevant demands in conducting semester type courses, and the approaches to be adopted in successfully creating a friendly and intellectual atmosphere in a class-room. In fact, most college teachers become good teachers only if it comes fairly easily and naturally. Those who do not have much natural flair seldom know how to begin remedying their failings even if they have the impulse.

#### Need for teacher-training

The implication, therefore, is obvious. The teaching community on whom now devolves the responsibility of implementing the Semester System in their colleges should be helped

to orient itself to its new task especially in its special role of class-room instruction. This could be done by providing orientation courses. Teacher-training should be made obligatory for college teachers and this could be imparted through suitable preservice or inservice programmes. Incentive should be provided to the teachers to undergo such training. Efficiency of teachers in the teaching-testing-learning process appropriate to the Semester System could thus be made possible.

The Conference of Vice-Chancellors held in 1974 in Madurai to consider the plan of action for examination reform of the UGC made the following observations about teacher-student interaction visualised in a Semester System.\*

"It is generally accepted that the Semester System is the effective system to encourage the students to learn the lessons with intimate interaction with the teachers. However, it is felt that if the semester system is to be effective, use of effective teaching methods applying modern methods of educational technology is necessary.\*

This strengthens the case for teacher-training for college teachers to make Semester System, a success.

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\* Quoted <sup>from</sup> in University Grants Commission : Conference of Vice-Chancellors, 1975, p.118.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF STUDIES

Democratic Organization perceived

The organizational aspect of the faculties or Departments of studies is a factor found basic in the perception of the college teaching communities about Semester System. The factor namely 'Democratic Faculty Organization' identified in this study focuses attention on the need for planning the academic functions of the teaching departments on a democratic basis. Under the changing circumstances it is important that the departments of studies are decentralised as decisions pertaining to curriculum, teaching, examination and student discipline are taken by the departments and the teachers concerned. The inter-disciplinary nature of the curriculum makes co-operation between the various departments imperative and within the department itself each teacher assumes definite responsibility in the conduct of the courses. There is also the need for teachers to be experimental and innovative in implementing the Semester System, for which freedom and democratization are essential prerequisites.

Present Organization Bureaucratic

Certain findings of the investigation suggest that the administrative set-up of the institutions of higher learning

in Madras remains bureaucratic and the different sections and categories of the teaching communities are not properly integrated in the common task of implementing the Semester System.

Firstly, it has been found that there exists a significant gap between the top administrators of the University, Directorate of Collegiate Education, and Autonomous Institutions of Madras on one hand, and the college teaching communities on the other about their perceptions of the Semester System, the former considering it as highly desirable and feasible and the latter not being positive about its feasibility. As is known, the decisions regarding the introduction of Semester System was taken at the highest levels, and the college teaching communities as a whole did not have any share in the decisions thus taken, and the latter had only been used as instruments in the task achievement process namely implementation of the decisions, hence the lack of understanding between the top administrators and the teaching communities. At this stage, for the success of the Semester System, it is important that the educational policy makers at the highest level establish a communication system with the student and teaching communities so that anomalies if any, in the working of the Semester System could be rectified, and better understanding created in the academic community about the Semester System.

Secondly, on the basis of age, sex, teaching experience, academic qualification, post held, faculty membership, types of institutions in which employed, the teaching communities have been found to be divided in their opinion about the extent to which the Semester System is desirable and feasible for adoption in their institutions. These variables having been related, the difference in opinion thus noticed could be attributed more to the bureaucratic and hierarchical set-up of the institutions than to any other reasons, psychological or social. In an administrative set-up of this sort, the different sections and categories of the teaching communities tend to remain compartmentalised with little scope for free communication among themselves. The consequence is that the administration comes to lack the necessary vibrancy and effectiveness in making the introduction of Semester System, for that matter any innovative practice, viable. The remedy lies in making the college administration open and participatory.\*

#### Open and participatory administration

The primary task of the administrative set up must be to ensure that the college does, in fact, function as a community of souls linked together in endeavour. The administrative structure must be sensitive to this basic issue. While

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\* Kurian, C.T., An Open and Participatory College Administration, Journal of Higher Education, Vol.1, No.2, Autumn, 1976, UGC, New Delhi, pp.203-211.

the administration will have to recognise different functions of the college community, it must not split the community on the basis of these functions. Further more, a college is not a natural community, but a created one and if the community is to become a living and growing one incorporating others also, all procedures have to be open from the very beginning. And the way to keep it open is to make it participatory. An open and participatory administration would belong to the community and would ensure that it has the flexibility to enable the community to proceed with its endeavour.

#### Administrative Structure

With these considerations, it may be possible now to examine what structures and procedures are necessary to have an open and participatory administration. The structures constitute a machinery which involves three processes, deliberation, decision-making, and implementation. They need not always exist in isolation. In fact at the departmental level, they should be merged so completely that it may even be impossible to separate them out as three distinct aspects. Such a merger of the three aspects is the ideal way to ensure that the administration is open and participatory. The three aspects would, for example, disintegrate when the Head of the Department makes the decision and expects the other members to implement them.

### Recommendations

Certain procedures may be recommended to make the administration open and participatory. First, it may be necessary to have a procedure of rotating the Headship of the Department. The procedure would help to remind the members of the Department that in the Department the academic element is more important than the managerial element. Such a procedure should see that no one member is overburdened with administrative work. Second, all legislative and executive powers should rest in the entire body of the teachers of the Department who should meet periodically to review and guide and take decision. Third, the day to day routine work and execution of policy as well as the ceremonial work should be performed by the Head of the Department. Fourth, larger Departments could work through committees e.g. research project committee, committee for semester courses, field of specialization committee, committee for administrative work etc. Fifth, in order to tune up the teaching and evaluation work, there should be a conference of all teachers and student representatives once a semester.

This kind of democratization of the Department of studies should be a basic step in the process of change over to Semester System.

#### D. ORGANIZATION OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

The investigation reveals that the college teaching communities in Madras desire adequate provision for plant and equipment in their institutions to make the Semester System feasible. Allied to this fact is their visualization of the organizational climate of the open type to facilitate proper organization and utilisation of the plant and equipments for instructional purposes. The factor underlying this perception of the college teaching communities has been identified as 'plant and equipment organization'.

The plant and equipment needed for semesterisation of courses may be divided in terms of the following functions.

1. Registration, enrolment, checking of eligibility forms and listing of candidates.
2. Arrangements for conducting tests and examinations and preparation of the grade sheets and transcript of credits of students.
3. Recording of attendance and application for leave of absence of students.
4. Guidance and counselling service.
5. Paper setting and printing and supply of question papers, and provision for a question bank. This is a confidential section.
6. Computer service where mechanical aids are available.
7. Library Service.

8. Audio-visual aids services.
9. Laboratory and project work.
10. Student employment where there is work-study programme available to students.

It is common knowledge that the colleges especially the non-professional ones are not adequately provided for in respect of the physical facilities needed for the semesterisation of courses. No time should be lost in making necessary provision in this regard lest the implementation of Semester System suffers.

The type of organizational climate existing in an institution has marked consequences on the performance of the organisation so much so that an open climate is essential for the proper administration of the plant and equipment. This aspect has been perceived by the teaching communities as already stated. Hence appropriate administrative procedures should be evolved for the organization and proper utilization of the plant and equipment keeping in view the needs of the learner.

#### E. INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE

##### Problems apprehended

The college teaching communities have perceived the Semester System more desirable than feasible. Their low opinion

about the feasibility of the Semester System may be attributed to their perceiving 'closed climate' conditions in the organizational climate of their institutions affecting the smooth working of the Semester System in their colleges as evidenced by the factor namely 'operational climate problems' identified in the study. The elements of the problems thus apprehended are as follows :

(a) The principal burdening the teachers with unnecessary work that hinders rather than facilitating the teachers in the performance of their duties.

(b) Lack of freedom for the teachers to conceive and tryout new ideas, and undertake experiments.

(c) No share in the decision-making process in their institutions. Decisions taken at higher levels are imposed on them.

(d) Lack of job security and the teachers' feeling of their social needs being not satisfied.

(e) The principal being formal and impersonal and emotionally distant from the staff.

(f) Lack of communication among the principal and the staff.

(g) Absence of friendly relationship among the staff.

(h) The behaviour of the principal characterised by dictatorial attitude and close supervision of the staff placing great emphasis on result, achievement, or production.

"Production-Emphasis", the main problem perceived

Of all this, the last mentioned namely 'production emphasis' is found to have the most negative influence on the perceptions of teachers about the feasibility of Semester System. The researchers on organizational climate have shown that Principal's behaviour is marked by high production emphasis in a 'closed climate' and by low production emphasis in a 'open climate' (Halpin 1966). The same conclusion was arrived at by Gandhi in his research in India (1977)\*. Ivy Franklin in her study of Colleges of Education of Gujarat State (1975)\* and Samrong Pengnu (1976) in his study of school climate of secondary schools of Central Zone of Thailand, and Neela Shelat in her study of 'School climate for educational change' (1978) have shown that school system in a traditional and developing societies remain by and large production oriented irrespective of the fact that a school or a college has open or closed climate.

'Production Emphasis' in the Principal's behaviour could be a detrimental factor in the context of any innovative reform in an educational system, much so when the Semester

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\* Doctoral Dissertations undertaken in the Faculty of Education and Psychology, M.S. University of Baroda.

System is in the process of being introduced in the colleges in Madras. When the college leadership is too anxious to achieve higher in terms of examination results and quicker outputs that would catch the eye of its management and the local community especially the university and the Education Department, the higher values of education envisaged in a Semester System are likely to be relegated to the background. There would be little room for experimentation and research in innovative measures.

#### Curriculum reconstruction impeded

The negative influence of 'production emphasis' on the perceptions of the college teachers about the desirability and feasibility of 'curriculum' of the Semester type in their colleges is made evident in the investigation. In fact, modernization of syllabi is an important factor envisaged in the introduction of Semester System even so the modernization process is likely to be impeded or stalled if there is high 'production emphasis' in the institutional climate. A cursory examination of the semester courses followed in colleges in Madras would make this evident. They have largely remained the old curricula cut into two at some convenient point of demarcation, generally at the half-way point to suit the purposes of the bi-yearly examinations or semester examinations now introduced.

Need for lowering "production emphasis"

It would be a grave mistake or rather self-defeating to try to semesterise the courses in this fashion. A semester course is a self-contained unit, a complete thing in itself, with a well-defined purpose behind it. A curriculum in a Semester System is expected to be flexible and to provide for inter-disciplinary approach in the selection and treatment of courses. Hopefully, as experience is gained in semester teaching, it may be possible for teachers to shed fossilized ways of looking at course contents and come up with some real restructuring at the department level itself in their colleges without waiting upon action about restructuring of courses that must be taken at higher levels. Thus the decentralisation of the process of curriculum reconstruction appears to be the expectations of UGC also as seen from its recommendations for the restructuring of courses (1975)\*. In order to facilitate its realisation and to make real the introduction of Semester System, the 'production emphasis' apprehended by teachers in the organizational climate of the institutions must be lowered if not eliminated.

"Thrust" as a positive influence

As a measure of lowering the 'production emphasis' it may be helpful to adopt a positive approach which is to give due emphasis to the open climate dimensions namely 'thrust'

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\* UGC recommendations for the restructuring of courses per se see conference of Vice-Chancellors, 1975, pp.94-101.

and 'esprit'. Halpin (1966) found that the profile of scores on climate dimensions 'esprit' and 'thrust' high and on 'disengagement' low in open climate. This investigation also reveals that 'thrust' has a positive influence on the perceptions of teachers about Semester System.

As seen earlier, 'thrust' refers to behaviour by the Principal which is characterised by his evident effort to 'move the organization'. He does so firstly, by motivating the staff for hard and intelligent work by his personal example, secondly, by instilling in his staff members a sense of responsibility, purpose and self direction. Halpin (1966:219) regards 'thrust' as probably an index of the Principal's freedom from need dominated attention in contrast to "Production emphasis" which signifies need-dominated attention which detracts him from reality-centred leadership. Thus a cultivation of 'thrust' in the organizational climate helps not only to lower 'production emphasis' but also to make the organization lively, energetic, and progressive.

#### F. THE EDUCATIVE PROCESS

The college teaching communities in Madras visualise the possibilities of sound learning in a Semester System. The varimax factor 'Sound Learning' identified in the investigation shows that the teaching communities perceive systematic study and evaluation, provision for selecting courses according

to one's needs and interest, and pacing academic work according to one's ability and circumstances, and small classes facilitating better teacher guidance as salient features of Semester System contributing towards sound learning.

#### Class load and attendance

In the Semester System the amount of class work put in by the student is computed on the basis of semester or credit hours. One has to earn the required number of credits for a pass in the course of study. This obviously is a motivating factor for prompt and regular attendance and study at all class appointments as required of every student in a Semester System. Continuous or near continuous evaluation of the student's work and immediate feed-backs provided him are also factor to be reckoned with in their regard.

The Semester System followed in India is not so strict in its attendance requirement as in U.S. In India 25 per cent of days of absence per Semester is allowed with provision for condonance of attendance whereas in U.S. only 16 or 17 per cent of days of absence is allowed with no provision for condonance of attendance. Coming later to class three times amounts to one absence in American system whereas in Indian system later coming is condoned.

#### Assistance in test correction

In the matter of internal evaluation of students, in the

Indian Semester System, the teacher himself corrects the tests, the term paper, and assignment, and decides the grades of the student. While this has the advantage of the teacher coming to know the student better and to keep track of his progress, in actual practice it renders the teacher unable to cope up with the demands of the strict schedule of teaching and evaluation in a Semester System.

The teacher in his duties of evaluation of students and immediate feed back, in an American System, is assisted by a Reader in correcting the objective type of daily tests and entering the grades of the students. As for term paper and assignments, the content is checked by the teacher, and the Reader checks the other aspects. With the burden of test correction work thus lightened, the teacher is enabled to concentrate on his daily lessons. The maintenance of a strict schedule of teaching, evaluation, and feedback helps students towards sound learning. It may be noted that the term Reader in the American Semester System has a different connotation from what is understood in India. The Reader in the American System is a student. He is called so because he helps the teacher to read. In his leisure hours during the working day of the college he helps the teacher with test correction. Under the John Dewey's pragmatic philosophy, a student learns while he works, the work may be different. Some students work as Readers while they study.

Work-study plan

In the American Semester System a student's class load is decided by such factors as his academic standing and his financial position. Accordingly he may be classified under one of four plans given below :

Plan	Class load Hours per week	Work Load	
		Hours of week	Work per month
1	16	5	20
2	16	15	60
3	12	25	100
4	8	40	160

Each plan indicates the normal class load for which the student may register and the number of work hours he is expected to fulfil. A class overload on any of these plans will have to be approved by the Academic Dean, and in some cases by the Curriculum Committee.

For example, on plans 1 and 2, students who wish to register for seventeen hours must obtain the approval of the Academic Dean. A class load of eighteen hours or more must have the approval of the Curriculum Committee. Requests for such loads shall be granted only if the committee is satisfied that the student is capable of carrying a heavier class load by his previous scholastic performance in the college. For an

eighteen hour load the student must have maintained a grade-point average of at least 2.5 on a normal load on the previous semester. Only under exceptional circumstances and when the grade-point average is exceptionally high, the committee may grant a maximum class load of nineteen hours.

Students who are employed either on or off the campus are required to adjust their class load in harmony with the prescribed academic schedule of the courses for which they have registered. A student with a minimum grade-point average of 2.5 during the previous semester may be allowed up to five additional hours of employment per week. A student who has been permitted to carry a class or work overload must maintain his grade-point average of 2.5. If he fails to maintain this average, his class or work load will be reduced at the direction of the curriculum committee.

In order to provide opportunity for students to earn a part of their expenses while attending college, and also to train them in worthy vocational services, industries are established by colleges. Among these are departments such as the press, bakery, metal industries, switch assembly, dairy, poultry, and farm. There are also many duties in operating the cafeteria and in keeping the buildings, equipments, and estate orderly which gives opportunity for students to work.

The various industries of the college and other work departments operate much as business units. Students are expected to be efficient and business like. Students are eligible for employment only as long as they maintain satisfactory conduct, scholarship and labour record. The work supervisors evaluate the students for their dependability, initiative, teachability, skill, efficiency and similar characteristics evidenced by good workers. The students who are employed thus are expected to maintain punctuality and regularity for their class work also.

#### Improved learning

The flexible nature of the Semester Courses provides for the gift and motivation of individual students. The quality of student learning improves and he also develops regular study habits. The classes are necessarily small in view of the inter-disciplinary nature of the courses which in turn helps the student in getting better help and guidance from his teachers with in the choice of his courses and in his day to day work.

#### G. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AMONG STAFF

##### The need and the problem perceived

The inter-disciplinary approach in the selection and offering of courses in a Semester System makes it imperative that proper inter-personal relationship exists among the

staff members. There is no gainsaying that fact that in implementing the Semester System many tasks are to be done in a team spirit. In this context mutual respect, trust, and fellow feeling is expected of the staff members. It is, however, evident from the findings that such a climate is wanting in the colleges and has consequently affected the working of the Semester System.

The factor, 'Interpersonal Problems', identified in the perceptions of teachers show that the problems perceived by the teachers in the introduction of Semester System are basically problems of inter-personal relationship in the institutions where they work. The constituent dimensions of this factor are leadership behaviour, dogmatism and teacher morale as briefly discussed below.

#### Leadership Behaviour - (Consideration dimension)

Leaders who are strong on 'consideration' in their leadership behaviour are friendly, and enjoy mutual trust, respect and warmth of relationship with their colleagues. The lack of 'consideration' in the behaviour of leaders or Principals has been perceived as a basic contributory factor to the problems felt by the college teaching communities.

#### Dogmatism

Dogmatism could be defined as a closed or irrational way of thinking, an authoritarian outlook on life, and an

intolerance toward those with opposing beliefs and a sufference of those with similar belief (Milton Rokeach, 1960:45).

Dogmatism is found to accentrate closedness of climate in an organization by reducing 'Esprit', 'Intimacy', 'consideration' and 'Thrust'. (Neela Shelat, 1968:219). In this investigation, dogmatism has been found to be one of the basic causes for the problems felt by the college teaching communities in adopting Semester System.

#### Teacher Morale

Conceptually, 'morale' refers to the mood and spirit of a group which can result in willing and whole-hearted performance of the individual teachers. The meaning implies sincere, genuine, cooperation of members of an organization in the pursuit of common goals in a common effort. Halpin (1966:151) defines morale as a pervading feeling entertained by teachers that "their social needs are satisfied, and that they are, at the same time, enjoying a sense of accomplishment in their job."

The present investigation has revealed the fact that the teacher morale dimensions, 'Teacher Welfare', 'Relations', 'Job Satisfaction', 'Security', have significant positive relationship to the perceptions of the teaching communities about adopting 'philosophy', 'curriculum', 'Evaluation', 'Learning', 'Teaching' and 'Plant and Equipment' of the

Semester System. It is, therefore, logical that the teachers perceive problems, where the teacher morale is at a low ebb.

Suggested solution

As a positive step in overcoming the difficulties perceived in introducing Semester System, the institutions should strive to cultivate better interpersonal relationship among its teachers. Once this is achieved, the academic and administrative problems become easy of solution. The approach, however, should be an integrated one as suggested below :

(1) The Principal must show personal involvement in solving the problems encountered in introducing Semester System. He should himself take classes, conduct and value tests, and conduct action research in respect of problems encountered. He must inspire the teachers for good work with his personal example and should rather lead them than drive them about. Due consideration should be given to the welfare, job and need satisfaction, and the job security of the staff.

(2) Teachers who have been long in the traditional system of education may not know the modalities of Semester System or they may be reluctant to adopt themselves to the change over to the new system. This situation may develop dogmatism among the staff. Hence it is important that the institutions

encourage and provide incentive to their teaching staff to attend work-shops, seminars, summer-schools and professional courses so that they keep themselves abreast of modern developments. In respect of Semester System, technical training may be imparted to them to acquaint them with the techniques of developing new courses and interdisciplinary time-table, and tools of evaluation, and, in general in the use of educational technology for instructional purposes.

(3) Team work should be encouraged. Team teaching, and group projects are examples suggested in this regard.

#### H. LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR

It has been commonly assumed that organizations are heavily influenced by their leaders. Great changes in an organizational system could be brought about by shifting leadership. A strong leader can instil determination and will to achieve results. He can make the organization perform beyond the ordinary and instigate action above the normal requirement. This assumption has great relevance in the wake of organizational changes that are taking place in the colleges consequent on the introduction of Semester System.

The investigation reveals that the college teaching communities in Madras expect their leaders, say, Principals or Heads of Departments as the case may be, to take the

initiative to establish appropriate organizational patterns, channels of communication and methods of procedure in their institutions for the successful functioning of the Semester System. The relevant factor identified in the perceptions of the College teaching communities is called 'Initiating Structure Expectancy'.

In an operational sense the principal or the leader may be said to have three functions, academic, managerial and administrative. The elements of managerial functions are the physical plant of the college, the machinery that makes and implements decisions, and the set of rules in vogue at that time. The administrative function is in fact a link between the academic and managerial function and is derived from them and does not exist apart from them. The Principal in his leadership behaviour should see that these three functions of his are blended together and they do not degenerate into three separate constituents.

Findings in this investigation show that the style of leadership behaviour has significant relationship to the problems perceived by the teachers in introducing Semester System. The lack of 'consideration' in the leadership behaviour has been found to be an important factor in this regard.

A change in the system of education involves appropriate organisational changes. It is, therefore, appropriate that

the teaching communities look forward to their leaders or Principals to effect necessary structural changes in the organization in the process of implementing the Semester System. Now the question is whether the leadership is equal to the task expected of them? It is evident from the findings that the Principals or leaders lack the needed perspective and will in making the Semester System feasible, and their negative leadership behaviour is causing human and administrative problems.

Remedial measures suggested are as follows :

(i) Immediate steps should be taken to orient the principals about the concept, structure, and organization of the Semester System.

(ii) Principals should be directly involved in the decision-making process at the highest level.

(iii) Only persons who could cope up with the academic, managerial and administrative functions of the institution should be appointed Principals. The Principal should essentially be an academician.

(iv) For the principal, taking class, guiding research, and publishing papers should be made obligatory. The quantum in this respect should be fixed taking into consideration his other functions.

(v) The post of Principal should be rotated among the Heads of Departments and senior Professors every two years so that they acquaint themselves with the issues and problems of management and are academically well informed.

#### 6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Semester System which is comparatively new to the Indian educational scene demands the attention of the researchers in its various theoretical and practical aspects as applicable to local conditions. In this regard a few suggestions for further study are given :

(1) A critical study of the perceptions of the student-community about the desirability and feasibility of Semester System.

(2) A comparative study of the organization of Semester System in the various Indian Universities.

(3) A critical study of the organization of Semester System in India in comparison with American Semester System.

(4) A critical study of innovations in academic calendars with special reference to Semester System.

(5) A critical study of the study habits of students in a Semester System in terms of their growth and development.

(6) A psychological study of the reaction of students to the frequency of tests and examinations in a Semester System.

- (7) A critical study of the administrative set-up of colleges in practising Semester System.
- (8) A critical study of the administrative and social problems faced by the teachers in a Semester System.
- (9) A critical study of the relevance of Semester System in the face of frequent student unrest faced in Indian Universities.
- (10) A comparative study of the performance of students in Semester and Trimester Systems.
- (11) A critical study of the leisure time and extra-curricular activities of students in terms of their growth and development in a Semester System.
- (12) A psychological study of the emotional stress of teachers and students under the strict schedule of a Semester System.
- (13) Evolving and trying out semesterised courses of study.
- (14) Evolving and standardising tests for the Question Bank.
- (15) A critical study of the use of educational technology in the instruction of semesterised courses.
- (16) Evolving and trying out work-study programmes in a Semester System.
- (17) Evolving and trying out correspondence courses in a Semester System.

(18) Evolving and trying out programmed instruction in semesterised courses.

#### 6.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter gives a brief resume of the research, its findings and educational implications, and suggestions for further study. It is found that the college teaching communities in Madras accept the change over to Semester pattern of academic calendar as a desirable proposition and they keep an open mind for possible improvement. They are, as it is, found lacking in their perceptions of the modalities of a Semester System such as teaching, learning, evaluation and curriculum. Great scope for teacher-student interaction and sound learning, and democratization of departments of studies are visualised by the teachers as an outcome of introducing Semester System. Problems of interpersonal relationship, and task-oriented authoritarian behaviour of leaders (principals) have been perceived as problems besetting the introduction of Semester System. The teaching communities expect open organizational climate conditions to be created for the effective organization and utilization of the plant and equipment for instructional purposes. Similarly they expect the leaders (principals) to take the initiative in establishing appropriate organizational patterns, channels of communication and methods and procedures in making the Semester System feasible.