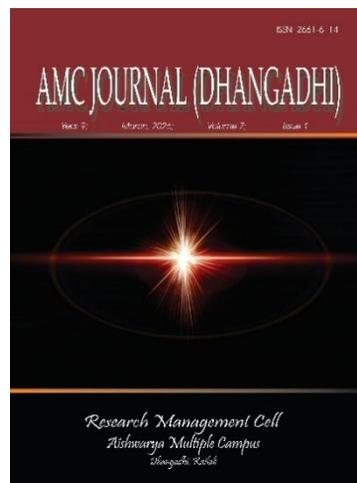# Real Life Practices and Perceptions of the Semester System: An Empirical Research

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Abstract

The focus of this research is on the practical application of the undergraduate semester system, which includes the delivery of syllabuses, examinations and extracurricular activities. By utilizing interview guidelines and thematic analysis of qualitative data from five faculties, the research investigates teacher practices, classroom activities, and perceptions of effectiveness. According to the findings, there is a discrepancy between student expectations and teacher practices, with teachers tending to use lecture-based techniques over more text-heavy approaches, while students prefer focused learning and easier access. Additionally, limited resources, library support and cheap devices impede self-learning through practical learning. There is a debate among faculty about the system's overall effectiveness, particularly for general programs, although technical courses are more suitable with semester schedules. Inadequate policies and implementation, such as unclear curricula, poor planning and miscommunication of language also undermine the execution. The semester system can enhance time-bound research and autonomy, but accomplishment requires robust resources, streamlined policies to support student success, enhanced faculty education, and a more focused educational approach. However, the optimal approach to improving semester-based higher education requires adjustments to resource allocation, curricular design, and institutional planning.

*Keywords**: autonomy, passivity, perceptions, technical programs, semester*

Introduction

The undergraduate semester system divides higher education into short, separate periods (terms), usually 15, 16 weeks long, focusing on modular learning, assessments, and credit accumulation. This study accounts for the real, life experience of students and lecturers in terms of the delivery of the syllabus, examinations, and extracurricular activities, as well as their perceptions. On one hand, these innovative systems get the learners to develop various skills; however, they are still found to lack the element of flexibility and student support (Brewer et al. 2011). Among the practices carried out in the undergraduate semester system, there are traditional lecture, based teaching, collaborative work, and periodic assessment mainly based on learning objectives. Opinions are different, as the students consider that they are better prepared in some skills than the supervisors are, who, in their turn, see the students being less skilled, thus, a clear gap in expectations is indicated (Brewer et al., 2011). The present work makes use of questionnaires and thematic analysis to study these issues at a factual level.

Experiments on students have demonstrated that the semester system promotes the development of research skills because it makes students work within a limited time frame, e. g. the laboratory class that combines theory and a project (Silva et al., 2023). But the opinions of the main stakeholders concerning the effectiveness of the system are not the same; thus, the changes are being made to better respond to the needs of the parties involved (Healey, 2005).

Education is a global endeavor, typically organized around annual or semester schedules. A semester usually encompasses about half the courses you'd find in a full academic year. In a well-structured education system, the planning and strategies are current and relevant to the semester format. This system combines assignments, student-focused activities, and various related tasks. It goes beyond just being an exam framework; it's an educational approach where "learning comes before teaching," placing the student at the heart of the process (Pathak & Rahman, 2013). An academic year can be split into two or three semesters, enabling students to enroll in a wider array of courses and complete them more quickly. However, successfully implementing the semester system requires meeting several essential conditions. Since semester courses are crafted to enhance students' learning outcomes within a specific timeframe, they tend to be more effective than year-long courses. In this study, I examined the teaching practices at the undergraduate level at ABC Multiple Campus. Educational resources play a crucial role in the learning experience for the betterment of students' learning in the interactive way (Jora, 2022; Jora, 2020c) in accordance with the language of their choices (Jora, 2020a).

The focus of learning in classes is on activities. Learner autonomy can be achieved among students through the development of self-direction (Holec, 1981). The students are responsible for their own learning and can improve their language skills through various methods and learning strategies. An annual system ensures that students study continuously throughout the year. Even so, the semester system is a necessity for the educational institution that must be implemented in academia (Jora & Joshi, 2025). The general educational programs are to be geared towards the semester curriculum and language acquisition for students (Jora, 2019a). Besides, the educators are involved in managing semesters linked to teaching learning packages. In school improvement, teachers are the most important factor and play a major role in applying and implementing changed enterprises. The semester system can help students retain in the nation for higher study (Jora, 2026). The practices of teachers have not been examined. For this reason, I attempted to research teacher practices and evaluate teachers' actions in relation to teaching and learning in order to create reflective classroom practices.

Literature Review

Real Life Practices and Perceptions

Real life practices and perceptions frequently diverge, as individuals navigate daily routines through pragmatic adaptations shaped by personal biases, cultural contexts, and experiential filters rather than abstract ideals. For instance, while people may perceive social norms as rigid guidelines, their actual behaviors often reflect selective compliance influenced by situational demands, such as prioritizing efficiency in workplaces or community interactions over strict adherence (McLeod, 2026). This perceptual-practical gap underscores how subjective interpretations drive real-world actions, affecting everything from decision-making to interpersonal dynamics (Carbon, 2014).

Student autonomy is a requirement for the semester system, which allows students to develop themselves independently (Jora, 2022). They also benefit from opportunities for improved learning and

performance in the learning sector. Students require activities that are both practical and conducive for their learning. Teaching methods involve coordinating actions, activities and tasks related to student learning. The teacher's access to teaching and learning procedures includes assignments that students must complete. Student dealings arranged by teachers are known as teacher practices.

According to practice theories, the organization, reproduction, and transformation of social life are analyzed through factors such as human activity, subjectivity, inter-subjectivity (Schatzki, 2001, p. 111). Information as a social construct is the primary focus of this study, which examines how information-related experiences generate and replicate specific outcomes that are approved by the social contexts in which they occur. To conceptualize information literacy as a socio-cultural activity, it is essential to have knowledge of practice and practices theory. The social discursive nature of information literacy is determined by the context, as it is a meta-practice that is integrated into all other practices. Social media platforms enable users to access information modalities, making information literacy a practice that facilitates learning and medium of learning is pivotal for students' learning (Jora, 2020b).

Through a process of meaning-making, this enables people to acquire, examine, evaluate, and consider material in order to eventually establish a connection with the collective knowledge of the field in which they work. Information literacy must be understood regarding the information landscape, which is defined by its discourses and practices that permit some forms of information while restricting others, as it is a socially and culturally impacted practice. Practice theory provides an explanation of the various ways in which knowledge is generated and disseminated, along with information, providing a more comprehensive perspective on information literacy as a learning-promoting practice. The practice theory emphasizes practices applied in the research setting. In this study, the theory was used to trace out teacher practices.

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) posits that human behavior is the outcome of multifaceted interaction between personal factors, environmental factors and behavioral patterns, known as triadic reciprocal determinism (Carbon, 2014).

This particular framework emphasizes observational learning, which involves acquiring new behaviors through observation, and also includes the belief in one's ability to perform actions successfully, known as self-efficacy, which motivates and persists in real-life practices. Students in educational settings, such as the semester system, can develop adaptive study habits by taking frequent assessments during mastery experiences, which improves their self-control (McLeod, 2026). Self-regulation is a key component of SCT application, which allows individuals to monitor and evaluate their actions in accordance with both internal norms and external feedback. Empirical research on semester systems reveals that students often view structured evaluations as beneficial because of observed success among peers, which reinforces proactive behaviors like consistent research engagement despite initial obstacles. The interplay between theoretical ideals and practical implementation fosters resilience and skill development in dynamic environments.

Jora and Joshi (2025a) concluded that semester system was more effective than annual system for students' self-learning and involvement. According to Sharma (2016), the semester system is preferable to the annual one and that everyone involved has a duty to support the adoption and prosperity of the semester programs. The semester system is beneficial for the effective learning of students. Here, Cansoy and Turkoglu (2022) investigate that a range of professional learning activities occur in schools through the exchange of teaching

practices, the provision and/or request of collegial support, the exploration of alternative pedagogical approaches, and the efficient use of the internet. The results also showed that a number of barriers prevent TPL in Turkish schools. There isn't enough time for teachers to work together and share on a daily basis. The studies that were consulted talked about teaching and learning in the semester system, implementing the semester system, teacher training, and teaching practice exercises. They tried to replicate the educational milieu of the semester system. They were not directed to the search forteacher practices and classroom activities in the semester classes at the undergraduate level. But this study had tried to explore the teacher practices employed in the classes at the undergraduate level. Along with this, this study discloses the perspectives of teachers on the semester systems.

Research Methodology

This work employed the interpretive paradigm to treat data as it would be in the research environment. Experimenting with data requires qualitative research methods (Creswell, 2012). This method is essential for exploring the phenomenon of study. In order to reveal real practices of the event and situations, qualitative research design is typically attempted. This study applied the phenomenological theory. Their recruitment was achieved through interviewing and attending the classes. I analyzed data from the three undergraduate teachers at ABC Multiple Campus who had prior experience in the sector using purposive sampling. They attempted to translate their views by describing the data. The interviews were the primary means of gathering data and recording the views of teachers on an audio recorder.

Afterward, I checked out the five faculties selected objectively and picked the site for my convenience and comprehension of the faculties. I asked the school officials to help me study. I requested the interview that I conducted to gather data. Later, I informed them that my intention was to go to the school and learn about how to use the semester system. I also built the relationship with my listeners. I employed the interview procedures for my data collection endeavors. I recorded the voices of those who were talking on the recorder. Moreover, I recorded the traditions of teachers on the notebooks.

There were 5 individuals representing various departments. They were professors teaching in a semester system at ABC Multiple Campus. I talked to professors from different fields to gain insight into their methods of conducting semester classes on a campus. I also went through the faculties' assemblies to observe their classroom routines and activities. Each of them came from a different school and region within the school. Their selection was determined through purposive sampling methods. I picked that it was effortless and comfortable to acquire the actual data necessary for my research. The interview procedure was applied to the selection of undergraduate faculty on campus, following specific protocols. The researcher engaged in informal and friendly discussions with the participants in the natural environment to elicit their actual findings.'... The audio recorder was utilized as the tool to gather data, while I also gathered information by making field notes.

Results and Discussion

Results

I now delve into the data and their analysis of what has been accomplished.'". My writing included the perspectives of lecturers on classroom exercises and interactions that are relevant to teaching undergraduate students. From the research questions (RQs) I mentioned earlier, I gathered data. The

data was transcribed to obtain the themes. The data was analyzed and interpreted through a theme. The themes were hand-drawn.

Less Effective in the Usual Way of Educating to Children

Semester-based learning is highly beneficial and crucial in the competitive world of today. The semesters could be beneficial and workable for students if the educational institutions were of good quality. Students can study on annual systems that are practical and platforms for their learning. Educational institutions must provide adequate amenities for their pedagogues to ensure that teaching and learning is focused on a goal and end result. Compared to that, the semester system is more versatile and adequate for students.

The teachers were interviewed to gather data on their activities during the semester classes. The idea that teachers struggle to differentiate between semester and annual courses and systems was born. They assert that they are both utilized for teaching and learning. That's because a semester is part of one academic year, they add. Effective annual systems are more effective in teaching students throughout the year. Getting through the course in time is a tough task. In shedding light on the semester and annual systems, the teacher P1 expressed words as:

> *Educational knowledge differs significantly from the annual and semester system. Two semesters are comprised of the academic year. Teaching learning materials are alike, but they last for a shorter time in the semester. The method and style used in the annual classes are identical to mine.... We don't have enough time when teaching in the semester system. In our context and background, annual systems are more effective and superior for our students. In this context, the annual system is appropriate for students. Students can be taught the entire curriculum as per their requirement in classes.*

The verbatim has illustrated the nature and thinking of teachers and students about the annual and semester systems. Students have not got the differences between semester and annual system based classes. Teaching learning items have not been considered different, and both systems are taken equally and as the usual systems. To be specific, semester is taken as the usual course. Teachers primarily teach as in the way of teaching to the annual streams. Semester classes as taken as the annual classes. Teachers say that they have lack of time for teaching students because the course has to be finished sooner. As teachers express, "the exams are administered sooner; the courses have not been completed.

The teaching and learning activities are oriented towards the teachers in the classes. Even people say it is the semester system thatempowers students for their active involvement in the activities designed by the teachers. In the case of semester classes, teachers are unable to grant the classes the sense of learning by doing. Teachers teach using the lecture method, even in semester classes. There are more roles of teachers in the class, and students do not like to perform activities in classes. Instead of performing, the students wish to get notes and ideas from the teacher. Teachers again more interest doing the works themselves in the class. Furthermore, they read the texts and make students follow whatever they say in the class.

Teachers teach using the traditional type of methodology in classes, but they need to teach traditionally. This is meant to say that they have the mindset to cultivate their method of teaching. After that, they

have the information and benefits of new technology and ways for teaching students. Generally, students of faculties like education, arts, and management like the teaching tradition of the annual system. They like to be taught using the teaching centered method. Contrarily, the classes are full of traditional waves of teaching. The cloud system is not available in all the classrooms and the projectors are only given in the costly programs.

The trend towards teaching learner centered way is less favorable because students prefer to be taught in a self-determinative way. Students request that teachers make them write the notes and summaries of the lesson. Moreover, they entirely depend on the teacher's notes in the classes. They take teachers as poor ones who do not provide notes and written answers to the students in classes. Teachers giving notes are taken as good teachers from the side of the students. Teachers teach in classes with the application of methods, techniques, and approaches they know. In line with this, students are not familiar with the techniques and methodologies. They are not given additional chances to change the educational achievement. The views of teachers is that they teach in the usual way and in the way they got education however they were educated in school. The teacher P2 forwards views as:

> *Employing the method I know and teaching the book through observation is my approach. The impact of social media on students is a result of their reduced strength. They are not interested in studying as we have spent time in our school and college education. Students and I both like standing in front of the class. That's what I do. Students find this approach to teaching beneficial and enhance their learning in classrooms.*

Teachers apply the traditional ways of teaching in semester classes. This is meant to say that textbooks and limited sources are not available. Lesson plans are in the minds of teachers. That is why the educational system of the nation is highlighting such type of activities in classes. Teacher-fronted activities and teaching matters are significant in the semester classes. Even now teachers come into the class, open textbooks, and teach from the books. Extra activities are less applicable for students. The concept of students is that teachers are for us and they have to doeverything for us. The policy of the nation is in the same direction, and fewer actions have been prepared to update and modify the educational objectives of the nation.

Limited Materials amid Students Passivity in Classes

To enhance students' learning, the semester system is implemented as an educational practice. This is the hub for promoting students' educational development. The aim is to provide learners with amenities that enhance their learning experience.' In addition, mechanized and advanced learning must have resources. Active learning is necessary for learners to achieve significant and measurable goals. Teaching should be a primary concern for teachers. The authorities on this side are less concerned about managing the cases of classes in a timely manner.' Their responses may indicate that the resources available to fulfill students are complex.

Lack of technical facilities is a common requirement among students. Laptops, tablets, iPods and other advanced tech devices are not within the budget for most students. Their background is marked by poverty. At times, teachers are incapable of guiding students towards fresh educational avenues. The authors are unaware of how to link to new websites and other links to obtain sources for the study. A faculty member has confirmed that a semester system has been implemented, but the university and

campus authorities have not yet undertaken rigorous planning and preparation. The programs have been introduced, but the needs of students' backgrounds, financial means, and other issues have not been addressed. Before its implementation and application, a thorough investigation was required. While the semester system is not ideal, it requires attention to application requirements. The final outcome will be better. In this respect, the P5 said that:

> *Students do not have printed textbooks, and short notes. They have the photocopied books which are difficult to read and are not durable. They are also expensive for buying. Students do not get the textbooks of students for day to day reading. The resources and related books are not sufficient for students. Level of students is not good and courses are vast for students. College has not supplied books for students required for studying.*

It is impossible for students to obtain book materials for any semester. The lack of text and material accessibility makes it hard for students to read them. It is not in stock of the prescribed books for the different semesters. No required books have been stored in the college library. There are no reference books available in that location, making it a challenge for students to obtain them. Hard copies of books are not available for students to purchase, and they are also not downloadable from websites. Students are also not given the hand outs on time. Therefore, learners are inactive in seeking out all sorts of materials and amenities that are not accessible to them or their educators.

Another teacher, P3, talked about the semester system of education in his own words. He says that it is good due to different factors and situations that are tried to be accomplished through the teaching learning process. All the relevant materials are needed in the educational dimension. Thereafter, the semester systems get the destination of teaching and learning arenas for achieving the needs of people. In this regard, the teacher P3 viewed as:

> *Semester system is good for students, and students can get education within the demarcation of time. The teaching learning activities happen regularly. But, it is not good in the context of our country. Students have not the access of resources and materials for reading and writing. System is new, but the university and the situation of the country is same as the earlier, and unemployment is increasing.*

Not all students are able to participate in the semester system. A semester that provides ample study space is a productive one for students. It is necessary for learning materials to be accessible. The concentration on goals can be achieved by converting passive learning into effective and focused learning. The main focus of the semester system is on the materials required for the chosen course of study. The use of student centered learning materials can stimulate and motivate students. Teaching resources, resource materials, and textbooks are not accessible in the library to meet students' needs.

Educational Systems Altered Giving Less Value to their Impacts

Colleges have launcheda semester system, students are told to provide education practically, and teachers are the central figures in academia. The education of the global trend is that the semester system is well, behavioral, and practical. It is good for the students of the 21st century because students are assigned to work themselves if the semester is conducted in a true sense and the paradigm shift has taken place (Jora, 2019a). The university has made the courses of program, but the thoughts of the

people of the related region have not been considered. With the impressive action of the subject matter, students can get a better orientation to the semester system. The course of study and its application need to be analyzed in terms of the necessities of people. Thus, annual system has been shifted to the semester system at University X.

The courses of study were designed to be conspired in everycorner of the room. They were brought into the worksheets. They were incorporated into the university's syllabuses. Another important thing for the university is that the importance of the semester system until now has not been clarified to the students and stakeholders. The current trend of the course contents has received less attention. Students' practical needs and interests have to be valued and included in the syllabuses. In light of this, education has to be inclusive and practical. The worksheets cover the subject matter, and the implementation level is not heavily considered. In this situation of the semester system, the teacher P4 states:

> *They create courses and choose selected texts, but they prioritize implementation time and load them with workload. We haven't considered the practical requirements of the course. The syllabuses of technical and general courses have been viewed from different angles, which is not conducive to student learning. Without considering the effectiveness or impression of systems, they have changed. The implementation level has not been impacted by the education needs that are currently required.*

Education is the lagging behind the education stream. Educational goals are not influenced by modernity or relevance, and they are determined solely by the course's nature. These are courses that are based on both text and theory. The needs of students were not taken into account in reality. Courses are not practical and should be included in the syllabus's mechanism. There, only the long texts are loaded, their techniques not enough and the text items do little to offer any depth. While the documents are filled out, their effectiveness is not always matched.

Despite the development of higher education policies, there has been no research on the trend of students pursuing higher studies overseas. The number of students pursuing education overseas is growing day by day. The degree policy level isn't thoughtful because the length of the course items and their relevance are less analyzed. Syllabi designers have demonstrated a decrease in ideas for the current universities in the country. A more recent example is the National University System. Both the nature and practical aspects of the curriculum haven't been thoroughly researched. No thorough examination has been conducted on the general syllabuses of courses like B Ed, BBS, etc. The needs of course must be linked to its reliability. The course's mechanism is not thoroughly examined.

Regarding policies, educational attainments have less concern for the construction of curriculum. Students in the semester system get less concentration in the behavioral portion of the course. Campus administration has given less value to the course contours of the planning and implementation. The same argument is made by P3, the teacher, who stated:

> *The campus imposes charges on the teacher, even though academic calendars are not created. Teachers have not been receiving payment for teaching additional hours. The policies are created by examining the curriculum in detail. Students' level, background and access are not comprehended. Nevertheless, Compatibility with the 21st-century course is essential. Further understanding and analysis are necessary for the analysis of the course.*

The well and intense planning and workouts are essential for the practical nature-based courses. Then, the campus has to consider the needs of students through the association of teaching faculties.The policies lack the essence of the curriculum, and the academic implementation is important to the categorization of the work. The features of students have to be taken into accountant, and the availability of the course contents is given less value. Students' needs are not concentrated in the course of study. The annual system has shifted to the semester system; for example, the name of the course has been changed. Teachers have to teach in the language of students, and they are more interested in being taught in their mother tongue, and Nepali is the language teachers use to deliver the items of teaching (Jora, 2024) in classes.

Relevant for Paid and Technical Programs at the College Level

Students assert that the use of semester systems is advantageous for certain programs, as per their teachers. Undergraduate students can learn and study effectively by tackling technical problems and taking new courses. Semester programs can be either paid or technically-oriented. Programs with these features can afford the semester system education. Their eagerness to access the content of semester education allows them to enjoy the programs. To facilitate their studies and perform tasks, students can use technical gadgets like tablets or lap tops.

Students and teachers consider the significance of semesters, as per their teachers' response. They are equipped with preparation and students opt for such systems. In terms of students' motivation, they prioritize assignments and can benefit from ICT-enabled teaching and learning (Jora & Basnet, 2025b). Afterward, they can follow the trend of semesters, and those who enroll in these programs are chosen through the entrance exam. Students are restricted to specific quotas, and they can only gain admission by passing the entrance examination. Programs like BSC Forestry, BHM, and BA LLB are more suited to the semester system, as stated by those who participated. Their perspective was that it would be more advantageous for students at general programs to study in the annual system. As per teacher P2, the respondents stated that students in general need to have a good deal of learning experience and meet certain standards. Continuing with this perspective, the teacher P2 declared:

> *The students can afford the necessary expenses and requirements for their studies. They're selected from the competition. Passing the entrance is necessary for individuals to be admitted to specific programs. The study requires regular and punctual attention from them. They follow the teacher's instructions once more. The students have a solid foundation for the study. They exercise caution and concentration while studying.*

The parents of the students studying are attentive and taking care of their children who have been accepted into technical programs. A participant in the survey stated that individuals who are followers have a natural interest in studying, demonstrate their faith, and strive to answer questions with sincerity. As I watched the class, I also noticed that students in technical programs were more concerned with their studies. The annual system was a hit among general students. The semester system's benefits have been overlooked by students who are studying general courses. This indicates that the investment of time by students is crucial for achieving directed paths.

Discussion

Data analysis and interpretation are necessary for emerging conclusions in any research project. The findings seem to be in line with the research situation. Furthermore, they indicate the essential conditions that must be met to carry out the task. Semester classes are beneficial and objective when they are handled objectively. Conversely, when oriented and utilized in the present-day educational contexts, they can be advantageous to both educators and pupils. The data analysis method was used to draw the study conclusions.

Students in semester system classes seem to have all the necessary equipment, devices and materials for classroom teaching while lacking their own laptops and other tools for self-directed learning. Many students are unable to afford the technical devices due to their high cost in general classes. Not all the resources for teaching have been provided by the college or campus.' Education under the semester system is not as easy to handle as education under an annual system. The number of assignments, class works, and performance-show programs for students in classes is reduced. The student body is guided by the annual system of teaching and learning in semester systems, but they lack the necessary resources and tools. Their preferred activity is to attend annual courses that cover teaching and learning.

The lecture method is the most commonly used method for teaching and learning in most classes. However, formal activities and classroom tasks are still being used to develop real teachings and assignments. There are no established policies for implementing programs in the curriculum and syllabuses, and students prefer ready-made notes and materials from their faculty during semester classes over manuals or evaluation tools. But the concerned teachers don't really know what all the children are learning. This is pedagogical and the core element of its curricular design, or semester structure. The orientation programs were not intended to be teaching-based. Numerous courses incorporate orientations because of the formality involved. Administrative responsibility for planning and managing the academic calendars has decreased.

Conclusion

In the context of global education, semester courses are crucial for students' learning. It doesn't matter what the situation and context are for students. Instructors also utilize any shortcuts and appropriateness for their teaching. They have a tendency to make students feel uneasy and hinder their learning. Although they are capable of teaching classes using the semester system mechanism, their inability to teach and learn through traditional methods is a disadvantage. Students are inclined towards receiving education, as in the yearly system. This study sought the opinions of teachers on how the semester system is used in classes. In contrast, the semester system-based classes are taken as normal and teachers begin studying immediately. The university has recently extended the mandatory breaks for teachers.? The teaching and learning projects are still being executed using the lecture method. The classroom is primarily where teacher-directed activities are involved. Educational programs are essential for practicing under the semester system, particularly in technical and paid programs.

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