



A STUDY ON PROS & CONS OF SEMESTER PATTERN IN DISTANCE EDUCATION IN TAMIL NADU

Mr. G. P. RAJA

M.Com., M.Phil., M.Ed., M.Phil., Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Directorate of Distance Education, Alagappa University, Karaikudi. Pin Code – 630 003, Tamil Nadu State.

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, distance education is getting popular and attracting large number of students to pursue their higher educational aspirations and needs. The semester pattern of education system whose main apprehension in learning rather than teaching and it is learner oriented and not to teacher oriented. The axiom of semester pattern is to put importance on continue compressive and in detail learning intending at capacity building and development of students through enhancing needed skills, knowledge and attitude. The semester pattern in distance education has both pros and cons, but pros is comparative more than cons. Significant difference is there among pros of semester pattern in distance education among profile of students and cons of semester pattern in distance education among profile of students. The pros of semester pattern in distance education has positive, significant and moderate relation with academic performance of students, while, the cons of semester pattern in distance education has negative, significant and moderate relation with academic performance of students. In order to enhance pros of semester pattern in distance education, it should coordinate course very well and it must make students to be highly focused.

KEYWORDS : Distance Education, Pros & Cons, Semester Pattern, Students

1. INTRODUCTION

Within the present day environment of swift technological changes and market reforms, the Indian educational system has problems of giving quality education to large number of aspirants and allotting considerable budgets for it. Majority of universities give solution for this problem through starting and providing educational opportunities through distance educational programmes (Prasad, 2001). Distance education gives effective learning possibilities at proper place and time for large number of students and their physical presence is not required in the universities (Deepak, 2013). Nowadays, distance education is getting popular and attracting large number of students to pursue their higher educational aspirations and needs (Gil-Jaurena, 2014). The semester pattern of education system whose main apprehension in learning rather than teaching (Aslam, 2012) and it is learner oriented and not to teacher oriented (Roy, 2015). The axiom of semester pattern is to put importance on continue compressive and in detail learning intending at capacity building and development of students through enhancing needed skills, knowledge and attitude (Singh and Kumar, 2016). Even though semester pattern has a number of advantages, it has also many disadvantages particularly in Indian higher educational system especially in distance education (Pabla, 2014) and it is adopted in recent past only and semester pattern affects academic performance of students of distance education (Yousaf and Hashim, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to study pros & cons of semester pattern in distance education in Tamil Nadu.

2. METHODOLOGY

The present study is carried out in Tamil Nadu state. Students of distance education are selected by using simple random sampling method and questionnaire method is used to collect data from 250 students of distance education. Percentages are worked out to understand profile of students of distance education and mean and standard deviation are computed to know pros and cons of semester pattern in distance education. t-test and F-test are used to scrutinize difference among profile of students of distance education and pros of semester pattern in distance education and profile of students of distance education and cons of semester pattern in distance education. Correlation analysis is carried out to study relation among views of students towards pros and cons of semester pattern in distance education and their academic performance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. PROFILE OF STUDENTS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

The profile of students of distance education is shown in Table-1. The findings clarify that 58.40 per cent of students of distance education are females, whilst, 41.60 per cent of them are males and 36.40 per cent of them are belonging to age category of 26 – 35 years, whilst, 19.40 per cent of them are belonging to age category of more than 45 years.

Table-1. Profile of Students of Distance Education

Profile	Number of Students	Percentage
Gender		
Male	104	41.60
Female	146	58.40
Age Category		
Less than 25 Years	64	25.60
26 – 35 Years	91	36.40
36– 45 Years	69	27.60
More than 45 Years	26	19.40
Course		
Under Graduation	141	56.40
Post Graduation	109	43.60
Monthly Income		
Below Rs.15,000	32	12.80
Rs.15,001 – Rs.25,000	101	40.40
Rs.25,001 – Rs.35,000	88	35.20
Above Rs.35,000	29	11.60
Marital Status		
Married	164	65.60
Unmarried	86	34.40

The findings disclose that 56.40 per cent of them are studying under graduation, whilst, 43.60 per cent of them are studying post graduation and 40.40 per cent of them are earning monthly income of Rs.15,001 – Rs.25,000, whilst, 11.60 per cent of them are earning monthly income of above Rs.35,000. Further, 65.60 per cent them are married, whilst, 34.40 per cent them are unmarried.

3.2. View Of Students Towards Pros Of Semester Pattern In Distance Education

The view of students towards pros of semester pattern in distance education was studied and the results are shown in Table-2.

Table-2. View of Students towards Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education

Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	Mean	Standard Deviation
Semester pattern in distance education provides opportunities to students to study various subjects	3.84	1.02
Semester pattern in distance education gives flexibility	3.80	1.05
Semester pattern in distance education gives assignments to enhance knowledge of students	3.76	1.08
Semester pattern in distance education coordinates courses well	3.39	1.14
Semester pattern in distance education is systematic and structured	3.74	1.07
Semester pattern in distance education makes students to be more focused	3.37	1.18
Semester pattern in distance education puts less pressure on students	3.70	1.03

The students of distance education are agreed with semester pattern in distance education provides opportunities to students to study various subjects, semester pattern in distance education gives flexibility, semester pattern in distance education gives assignments to enhance knowledge of students, semester pattern in distance education is systematic and structured and semester pattern in distance education puts less pressure on students, while, they are neutral with semester pattern in distance education coordinates courses well and semester pattern in distance education makes students to be more focused.

3.3. Profile Of Students And Their Views On Pros Of Semester Pattern In Distance Education

To inspect difference among profile of students and their views on pros of semester pattern in distance education, t-test and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test are done and the results are given in Table-3.

Table-3. Difference between Profile of Students and Their Views on Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education

Particulars	t-Value / F-Value	Sig.
Gender and Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	5.889** (t-value)	.000
Age Category and Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.446** (F-value)	.000
Course and Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.398** (t-value)	.000
Monthly Income and Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.558** (F-value)	.000
Marital Status and Pros of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	3.338** (t-value)	.001

** Significant at 1 % level

The t-values and F-values are elucidating significant difference exists in pros of semester pattern in distance education among profile of students at one cent level. As a result, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

3.4. View Of Students Towards Cons Of Semester Pattern In Distance Education

The view of students towards cons of semester pattern in distance education was studied and the results are shown in Table-4.

Table-4. View of Students towards Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education

Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	Mean	Standard Deviation
Semester pattern in distance education gives no opportunities for students to express their opinions	3.88	1.06
Semester pattern in distance education provides no time to students for additional reading	3.82	1.00
Semester pattern in distance education gives bifurcated syllabus	3.34	1.18
Semester pattern in distance education provides no co-curricular activities	3.78	1.03
Semester pattern in distance education forces students to manage course in short period	3.36	1.17
Semester pattern in distance education provides no regular interaction among teachers and students	3.75	1.04
Semester pattern in distance education gives no in depth knowledge on subject to students	3.77	1.08

The students of distance education are agreed with semester pattern in distance education gives no opportunities for students to express their opinions, semester pattern in distance education provides no time to students for additional reading, semester pattern in distance education provides no co-curricular activities, semester pattern in distance education provides no regular interaction among teachers and students and semester pattern in distance education gives no in depth knowledge on subject to students, while, they are neutral with semester pattern in distance education gives bifurcated syllabus and semester pattern in distance education forces students to manage course in short period.

3.5. Profile Of Students And Their Views On Cons Of Semester Pattern In Distance Education

To inspect difference among profile of students and their views on cons of semester pattern in distance education, t-test and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test are done and the results are given in Table-5.

Table-5. Difference between Profile of Students and Their Views on Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education

Particulars	t-Value / F-Value	Sig.
Gender and Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.403** (t-value)	.000
Age Category and Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.324** (F-value)	.000
Course and Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.500** (t-value)	.000
Monthly Income and Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	4.816** (F-value)	.000
Marital Status and Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education	3.356** (t-value)	.001

** Significant at 1 % level

The t-values and F-values are explicating significant difference exists in cons of semester pattern in distance education among profile of students at one cent level. As a result, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

3.6. Relation Among Views Of Students Towards Pros And Cons Of Semester Pattern In Distance Education And Their Academic Performance

The relation among views of students towards pros and cons of semester pattern in distance education and their academic performance was studied through correlation analysis and the

results are shown in Table-6.

Table-6. Relation among Views of Students towards Pros and Cons of Semester Pattern in Distance Education and Their Academic Performance

Particulars	Pros of Semester Pattern	Cons of Semester Pattern	Academic Performance
Pros of Semester Pattern	1.00		
Cons of Semester Pattern	-0.47	1.00	
Academic Performance	0.58	-0.53	1.00

** Significant at one per cent level

The correlation coefficient among pros of semester pattern in distance education and academic performance of students is 0.58, which is moderately and positively related with each other at one per cent level of significance. The cons of semester pattern in distance education is negatively and moderately correlated with academic performance of students with the coefficient value of -0.53. In view of that, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

4. CONCLUSION

The above analysis demonstrates that semester pattern in distance education has both pros and cons, but pros is comparative more than cons. Significant difference is there among pros of semester pattern in distance education among profile of students and cons of semester pattern in distance education among profile of students. The pros of semester pattern in distance education has positive, significant and moderate relation with academic performance of students, while, the cons of semester pattern in distance education has negative, significant and moderate relation with academic performance of students. In order to enhance pros of semester pattern in distance education, it should coordinate course very well and it must make students to be highly focused. To reduce cons of semester pattern in distance education, it should converge and combine syllabus effectively and it must make students to manage course efficiently within stipulated time period.

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