

Transformation to Four Years Bachelor Study Program: Issues and Challenges in Graduate Colleges of Balochistan

Zainuddin Kakar

Director Quality Enhancement Cell, University of Loralai, Pakistan.

Email: zainkakar12@yahoo.com

Syed Munawar Shah

Associate Professor, Department of Economics, BUITEMS University

Email: syed.munawar@buitms.edu.pk

s.munawarshah@gmail.com

Abstract

Recently, the government of Balochistan has implemented the policy of transforming the annual system into the semester system. This study aims to explore the issues and challenges in four years of Bachelor Study Program or the semester system in graduate colleges of Quetta. The study is based on primary data collected from the seven colleges' teachers through a designed questionnaire. The results reveal that teachers are confronted with issues such as lack of knowledge, training, and infrastructure. In the absence of basic training, the teachers accustomed to annual system face difficulties in understanding and conducting the examination. For instance, it was observed that the teachers had a little or no idea about the terms such as grading policy, GPA and credit hours. Therefore, immediate attention is required in terms of educating and training the faculty for the new education system. Moreover, the

government and policymakers ought to ensure the availability of basic facilities.

Keywords: Colleges, teachers, semester system, professional development, knowledge, examination, assignment, computer lab.

Introduction

The excellent and effective education system can improve the social, cultural, scientific and technological advancement. The status of human resource development in a country depends upon the quality and superiority of education system in the country (Haider; 2008; Diemer & Khushik; 2018). The aim of education is not just to advance information in defined branches of knowledge; it has a profounder and multidimensional meaning and social, economic and cultural impacts (Moor & Farries; 1991). Education plays a significant role in the human capital formation. it increases the efficiency and productivity of people and therefore yields skilled human capital that is competent of leading the economy the road map of sustainable economic development (Memon; 2007).

According to a UNDP report, Pakistan's literacy rate is 58%, is very low as compared to the other developing countries. Since, the birth of Pakistan as an independent country, it faced severe problems in the education system. The prevailing education system got failed to deliver its role in economic growth and prosperity of the country as pointed by (Ahmad et al 2014). For instance, due to poor education system, the society could not grow and is afflicted with problems such as insecurity, poverty, terrorism and sectarianism. One of the reasons is the inability and impatience of the society in tackling the differences that originate from within the society.

An effective educational system would have made the society capable enough to absorb in capabilities. The remarkable lowest allocated budget has been kept for the system of education since the inception of Pakistan which has made weakened the base and foundation of the required quality in the education techniques and system. The prevailing education system, hence crashed to uplift the nation socially, politically and economically (Rehman and Khan, 2011). The adult literacy rate is 58%, is very low as compared to the other developing countries (UNDP, 2016). The tremendously low level of public investment is the main root cause of the poor functioning of Pakistan's education sector. The public expenditure on education endured less than 2% of GNP (UNESCO, 2018). As a result, in the world, Pakistan possesses one of the lowest rate of literacy and the lowest amongst countries of comparative available resources and social/political/economic situation (Ali, 2017).

Balochistan, the province of Pakistan, is rich in natural resources, but lack of trained and rich human resource, because the education has been paid little attention by the fast regimes. The challenges to educational, social, economic and political development, efforts get most complicated by the multilingual and multiethnic populace (GoB, 2017).

Balochistan consists of 44 percent of Pakistan, whereas, the province hosts only 5 percent of the country's population. The population consists of Baloch, Brahvi and Pashtoon, another ethnic group including Punjabi and Urdu speaking generally in a metropolitan area with the mainstream in Quetta, Hazara instigating from the Hazarajat of Afghanistan and lesser pockets of other racial groups. The majority of latter ethnics assemblies' area in Quetta, the capital city of the province. Balochistan has the highest

gender gaps, weakest indicators and lowest literacy rate in the country (GoB, 2015).

In Balochistan, the education system consists of primary, secondary, and higher education. The higher education comprises of universities that role autonomously and the inter and degree colleges under the shadow of Department of Higher Education, Government of Balochistan. The universities obtain their approval from the provincial assembly followed by the guidelines delivered by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. The colleges under the Government of Balochistan, Higher Education Department institute four categories: intermediate colleges, cadet colleges, residential colleges, technical and graduate colleges. Similarly, the graduate colleges have graduate courses sideways with intermediate, the inter colleges handling only intermediate courses, whereas, the cadet and residential colleges can be reflected the elite schools of the public sector. According to statistics, there are eighty-six (86) intermediate colleges, forty-nine (49) graduate colleges, five (5) residential colleges, and seven (7) cadet colleges in Balochistan. The province has seven (7) universities, University of Balochistan as the largest (GoB, 2019).

Right now, the college sector analogues to school has observed the academic exertion from an input standpoint. Productions in term of requirements for additional higher education or else the world of efforts have not been envisioned. The graduate courses in these colleges have maintain the two-year set-up notwithstanding four-year curricula advanced by Higher Education Commission for most graduate courses. The core reason for non-transition has been nonexistence of planning, infrastructure, faculty and funding to maintain four-year programs. In term teaching and

curriculum the graduate students to obtain no foundation in research methodology, approach or exposure to a broader spectrum of choices to the development of a wider viewpoint. The relevance of programs to the world of efforts has on no occasion been assessed and the students have no option to career counseling.

An important development in the province Balochistan has been the start of the semester system in the graduate colleges of Balochistan. The colleges, Higher and Technical Education Department offered four-year Bachelor Study (BS) programs in graduate colleges of Balochistan. Presently seven graduate Colleges in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan have started the four year BS programs. In order to analyze the four-year Bachelor Study program, the present study is a modest effort to analyze the issues and challenges in the semester system in the graduate colleges of Balochistan. For this purpose, the study aims to explore the teacher's perspective and to highlight the issues and challenges. Based on the concerns of teachers, the study intends to put forward policy recommendations.

Material and Method

This section presents the general description of the study area, research design and delivers information about the data source, data assortment instruments, sampling methods and techniques, and methodology.

Study Area: An Overview of Quetta District

Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan was developed by the British Government in the 19th century as a garrison town to endure its military station in Balochistan. Similarly, from 1955 to 1970, under the one-unit system, Kalat and Quetta were the administrative entities in the West Pakistan. Afterward ending the unitary system, Quetta city was proclaimed

as the capital city of Balochistan. Till 1947, Quetta was a smaller town. Nonetheless, prompt population growth in term of the rural-urban migration, and the incursion of Indian refugees augmented the population of Quetta. The arrival of Afghan refugees throughout the 1980s helps the slums to grow. Furthermore, new settlement in the shape of housing schemes developed as Jinnah Town, Satellite Town, Model Town, Samungaly Town, Arbab Town and Shahbaz Town. The process and development of outsiders' settlement lingers even today, which has revolved Quetta into an overpopulated metropolitan and city. (Bokhari, 2015).



Figure 1. Map showing the study area of Quetta City of Balochistan, Pakistan

The overall literacy rate in Quetta District is 70% with the male 85% and female 52%. Similarly, for the urban-rural evaluation, the urban literacy rate is greater than the rural, which is 74% with the male 88% and female 58%. However, the rural literacy rate is 54% with the male 74% and female 25%. There is a total of 21 colleges with the Boys 12 colleges and Girls 9 colleges in Quetta district. Furthermore, the total enrolment rate at the collegiate level is 26,829 with the Boys 16,862 and Girls 9,967. The entire number of colleges' lecturers are 927, from which male lecturers are 618

and female lecturers are 309. Therefore, on an average, every college has a registration of 1,277 candidate's students with a teaching faculty of 30 (GoB, 2019).

Research Methods

A well-structured questionnaire was advanced and distributed amongst experts for their observations and suggestion. Similarly, following their feedback, the questionnaire was studied. Keeping in view the objectives all the important information is included in the questionnaire. Information was collected from the seven colleges' lecturers of Quetta City. Primary and secondary data were used for this study. The major tool of the primary data collection was a questionnaire. Furthermore, secondary data were assembled from the relevant department i.e. Directorate of Colleges, NGOs and literature listed in references.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the issues and challenges in the Bachelor Study Programs (semester system) in Quetta City of Balochistan, for this purpose the college teachers' community of the study range Quetta City is reserved a target population. The Colleges Higher and Technical Education Department has started the Bachelor Study programs (semester system) in seven colleges of Quetta (i.e. Government Science College Quetta, Government Degree Quetta, Government Hassan Musa College Quetta, Girls Cant College Quetta, Girls Jinnah Town College Quetta, Girls Musa College Quetta, and Girls Quarry road College Quetta). The questionnaire was distributed among the above mentioned seven colleges' teacher of Quetta city. The data were received from 124 college teacher as a sample size (i.e. 11 from Science College Quetta, 35 from Degree College Quetta, 4 from Hassan Musa College Quetta, 38 from Girls Quetta Cant College, 12 from Girls Jinnah Town College Quetta, 14 from Girls

College Quarry Road Quetta, and 10 from Girls Hassan Musa College Quetta) through stratified random sampling.

Results and Discussions

This section is based on the outcomes of the study. The section presents the issues and challenges in the semester system of education in the study area of Quetta City in Balochistan. The followings issues and challenges are discussed in BS programs as mentioned below.

Lack of Knowledge about BS Semester System

Knowledge about the semester system for a college teacher is very essential. The success of the semester system depends on the knowledge of the semester. During the survey it has been observed that most of the college teachers do not have knowledge about the semester system. In response to a question examined from the teacher about the understanding of the BS program, the following response obtained as per figure 2 below.

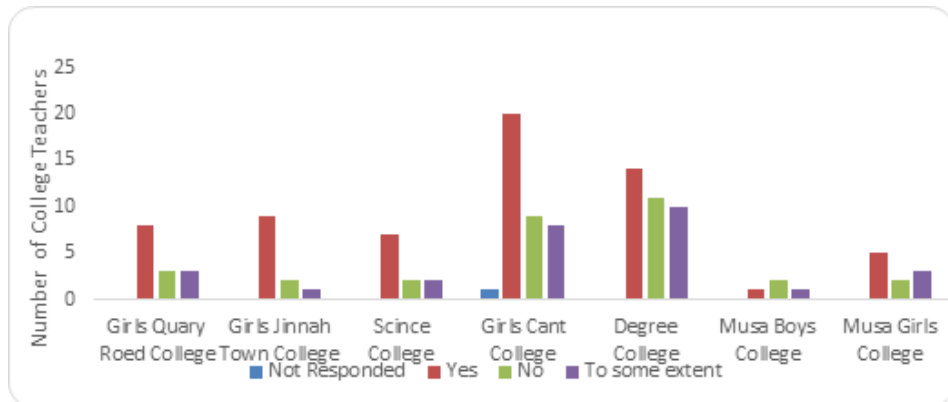


Figure 2. Colleges' Teachers Perception about the Understanding of BS Programs

Figure 2 shows the statistics about the colleges' teacher perception about the understanding of BS programs. Out of 124 teachers, 64 teachers

mentioned that they understand the BS Programs (i.e. 8 in Girls Quarry Road College, 9 in Girls Jinnah Town College, 6 in Science College, 20 in Girls Cant College, 14 in Degree College, 2 in Musa Boys College and 5 in Musa Girls College). 31 teachers mentioned that they do not understand the BS Programs (3 in Girls Quarry Road College, 2 in Girls Jinnah Town College, 2 in Science College, 9 in Girls Cant College, 11 in Degree College, 2 in Musa Boys College and 3 in Musa Girls College), and 29 teachers of all seven colleges mentioned to some extent. The reason for not understanding of BS Programs is the majority of them are not studying through the semester system. In another question when the Colleges' teacher was asked whether they study through semester system educational institution. The following responses were received from the teacher as per in figure 3.

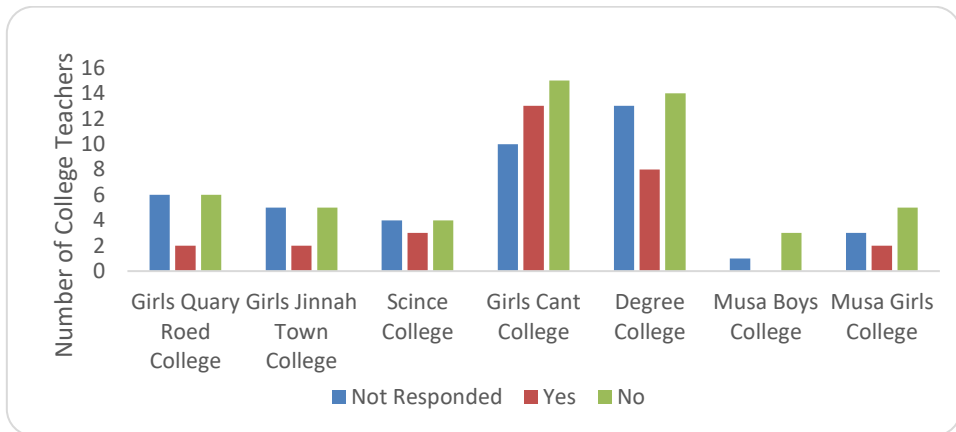


Figure 3. Colleges' Teacher Perception about Studying through Semester System Institution

Figure 3 shows the Colleges' Teacher perception about studying through semester system educational institution. It has been found that out of 124 Teacher, 52 teachers in all seven colleges Quetta mentioned that they did not study through semester system educational institution. 30 teachers in

all seven colleges mentioned yes that they studied through the semester system educational system, and 42 teachers did not respond to this question. So the majority of the teachers were not studying through semester system educational institution.

Lack of Professional Development of Teacher

Training is fundamental for quality performance. Alike, Teaching is a challenging occupation. There is a shortage of training opportunities for a teacher in Balochistan. There is only one training institution “Balochistan Academy for College Teacher” (BACT) for college teacher in Balochistan. This institution has no proper building for training. The institution has not well resources as a result of lack of fund and competent human resources. The courses actuality run in the organization are very non-operational which does not heighten the skills, quality and motivation, of the teacher. During the survey when the question asked from the teacher how much professional training they have received from the BACT and other institution. The following response received as per figure 4 shows.

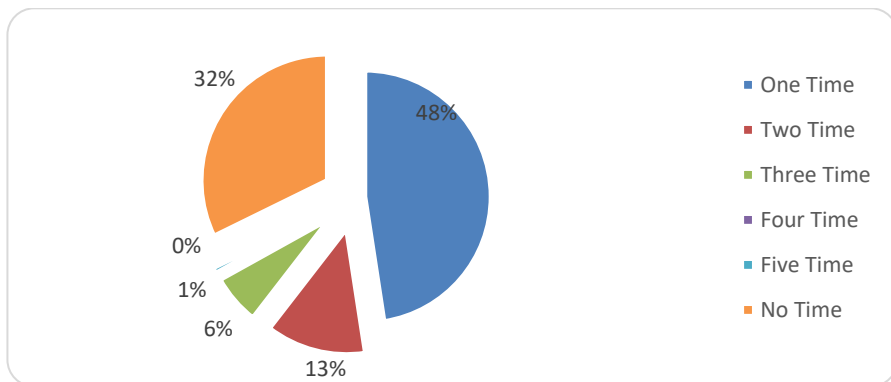


Figure 4. Colleges' Teacher Perception about Professional Training Received from BACT

The above figure shows the teacher perception about professional training received from BACT and other training institution. Out of 124 college

teacher, 48% mentioned that they received training one time from BACT, 13% received two times, 6% received three times, 1% received five-time professional training from BACT, and 32% mentioned that they did not receive any training from BACT or other institution. So this result shows that most of the teachers are teaching without getting professional training from a training institution.

Lack of Qualified Teachers

The teachers are the backbone of an education system. Whereas, the quality of the teacher in Balochistan colleges is deplorable. Majority of the teaching staff do not know something like lesson planning which makes them incapable of exchanging with different issues in the process of learning and teaching. Research activities are not conducted by the teacher in colleges; they are not provided opportunities to improve their qualification. Majority of the college teacher is a master degree holder, the opportunities of acquiring M. Phil and Ph.D. degree not provided to them. In response to a question asked from all the seven colleges' teacher of Quetta about their academic qualification, the following answer come as per figure 5 shows.

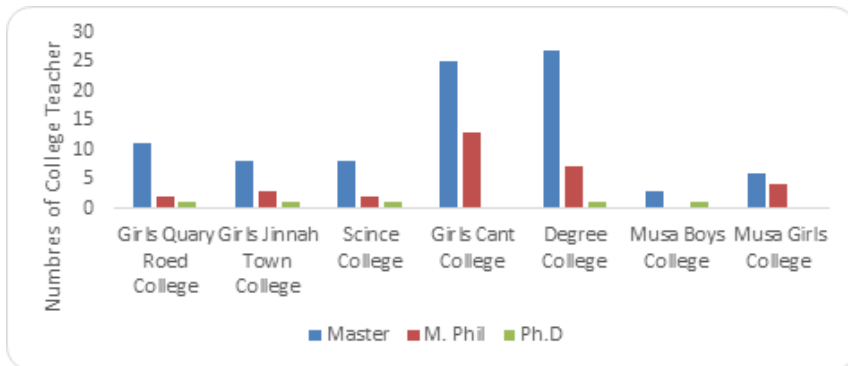


Figure 5. Colleges' Teacher Perception about their Academic Qualification

The above figure shows the college teachers' qualification in the seven colleges of Quetta, the majority of the teachers having master degree holders. Out of a total of 124 teachers, only 5 teachers are Ph.D. degree holders, 31 teachers are M.Phil. degree holders and the rest of others are master degree holders.

Traditional Methods of Teaching

Most of the teachers in colleges' use lecture as the traditional methods of teaching. They rely on lecture approaches which do not deliver an opportunity for students to contribute in the process of education as an active participant. Research has established that teachers do not employ new techniques, methods and strategies of learning and teaching. During a survey in a question when the teachers were asked what kind of teaching normally they are used during a lecture in their classes i.e. Lecture, Demonstration, Brainstorming, Think-Pair-Share, Questioning, Activity base Teaching, and Group Discussion. The following response received by all the seven colleges' teacher of Quetta, as per shown in figure 6.

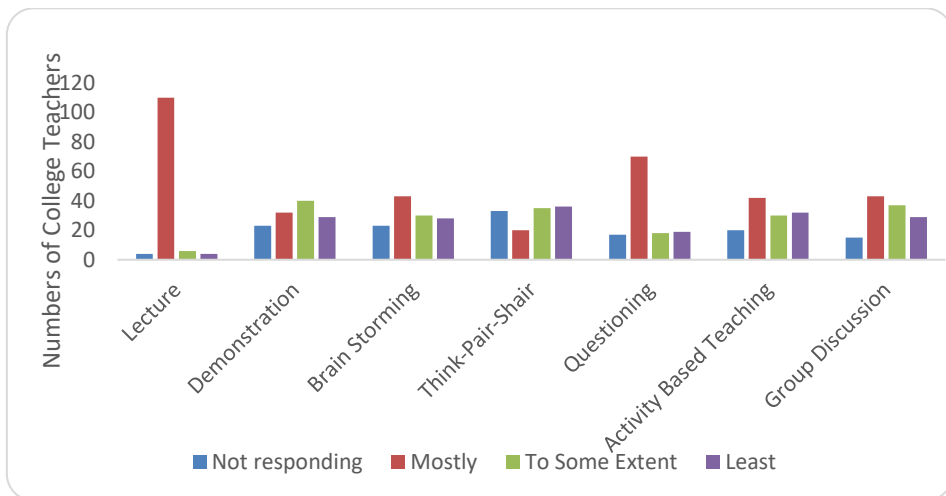


Figure 6. Colleges' Teacher Perception about teaching strategies used in their class

The above figure shows that most of the teacher used lecture as teaching strategies in their class. Majority of them are using the traditional methods of teaching i.e. lecture and questioning in class, less of them using the activity base teaching methods such as demonstration, brainstorming and group discussion. Majority of them depend on the lecture techniques which do not renders an opportunity and base for students to take part in the process of education and learning as an active candidate.

Lack of Research Activities

Research establish rise to oddity and an aspiration to look for, and discover a better solution to an everyday problem or better explanation for whatever solution. The research activities are not conducted in the educational institutions of Balochistan especially in colleges of Balochistan. Teachers in such institutions, typically have no research experience and exposure. Lack of adequate facilities and funding are presented by the teaching staff as the major cause that research has not performed in colleges of Balochistan. So they are facing difficulties to give assignment or research activities to students in the semester system. Research/ assignment are mandatory in the semester system. During the survey, teachers were asked what greatest challenges they are facing during a lecture in a semester system (rank top 5). The following response received from all the seven colleges' teacher of Quetta city.

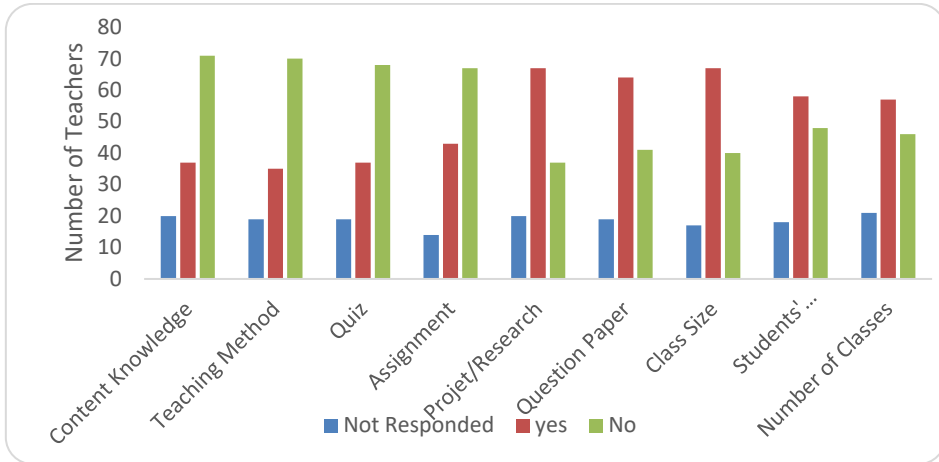


Figure 7. Greatest Challenges Face by College Teachers during Class in BS Programs

Figure 7 shows the five greatest challenges facing by colleges' teacher during class in the semester system. The results show that the top five challenges for teachers in BS programs are Research/Project, making of question papers, class size overcrowded classes, students' presentation and a number of classes. So these are the challenges especially research for college teachers in semester system which need to address.

Lack of Resources

There is a lack of educational resources such as books, libraries, Multimedia, projector, computer internet facilities in all colleges of Quetta city being capital and headquarter of the province. In addition, there are overcrowded schoolrooms and unpropitious -equipped laboratories. During a survey when a question asked from the teachers of all seven colleges of Quetta city provided by their colleges' principal, the following responses have been received.

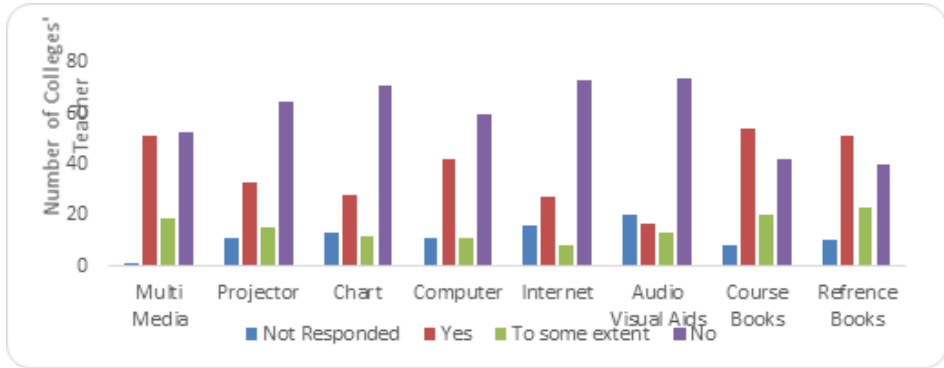


Figure 8. Colleges' Teacher Perception about facilities provided by the college Principal

The above figure shows that most of the colleges' teachers are not provided the facilities such as multimedia, projectors, chart, computer, internet facilities, audio-visual aids and books by their colleges' principal. Hence lack of resources is one of the key factors causing an obstacle in the success of the semester system in the different colleges of Quetta city.

Lack of knowledge about Examination in Semester System

The examination is the assessment of a student's education. It should be constructed on quantitative and qualitative techniques to comprehensively assess the performance of students. Furthermore, the standards must guarantee the reliability and validity of the procedure run down in the assessment process. In the semester system, there are two centralized examinations (midterm, and final/terminal examinations). Besides examination in semester system class tests, assignment, quiz, etc to be conducted by the course teacher as per usual semester system. In a semester system, the grading policy such as Grade Point Average and Cumulative Grade Policy will be calculated by the teacher himself. The teacher also should know about the credit hours, and how many hours he spends in class

per week, but most of the teachers were not experienced of the examination requirement of the semester system. During a survey in a question the teachers were asked whether they know about the minimum GPA/CGPA requirement for a student semester wise, the following response received from all the teachers of seven colleges in Quetta City as per figure below.

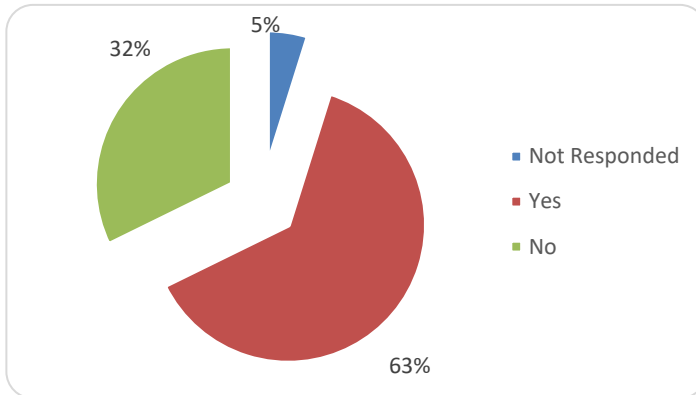


Figure 9. Teacher Perception about the minimum GPA/CGPA requirement for a Student

Figure 9 shows the perception of all seven colleges' teacher about the minimum GPA/CGPA requirement for a student in the semester system. Out of total 124 colleges' teachers, 63% replied that they know about the minimum GPA/CGPA requirement for a student in the semester system, and 32% stated that they do not know about the minimum CGPA requirement for a semester. So this figure shows that it is a large number of teachers who do not know about the minimum requirement of CGPA, as the semester system already started in these colleges and teaching in the capital city of the province. Moreover, the majority of the teachers did not know about the credit hours in each subject of the semester.

Issues in semester committee

In the semester system, each college has a semester committee headed by semester coordinator. The semester committee will execute the following function i.e. Ensure and supervise the semester schedules, class attendance, semester break, readmission, arrangement for the conduct and supervision of examination, preparation and announcement of results of midterm and final examination, etc. but most of the teachers have no knowledge about the function of semester committee as shown in figure 10

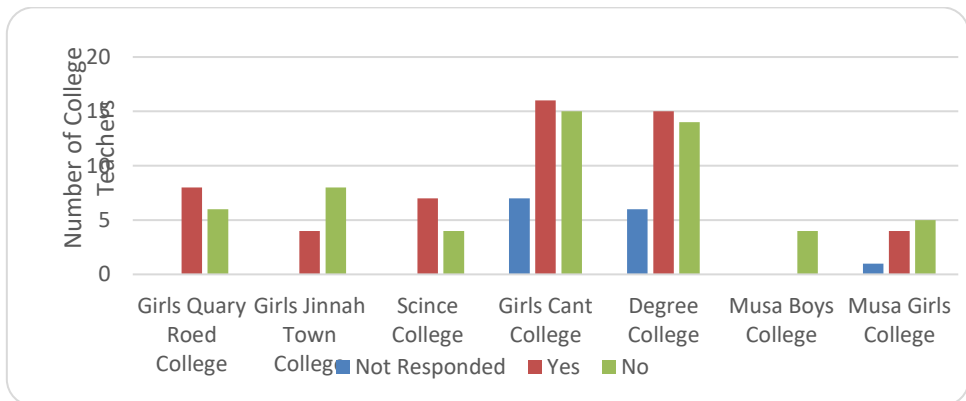


Figure 10. Teachers' Perception to know about the Function of College Semester Committee

Figure 10 shows the perception of all seven colleges' teacher about to know the function of the College semester committee. In Girls Quarry Road College out of total of 14 teachers, 6 mentioned that they do not know about the function of semester committee. In Girls Jinnah Town College out of 12 teachers, 8 stated that they do not know about the function of semester committee. In Science College out of 11 teachers, 4 stated that they do not know. In the same way in Girls Cant College out of 38 teachers, 15 teachers stated that they do not know about the function of semester committee. Similarly in Boys Degree College, out of 35 teachers, 14 mentioned that they do not know. In Mussa Boys College out of 4 teachers,

all of them mentioned that they do not know about the semester committee. In last in Mussa Girls College out of 10 teachers, 5 stated that they do not know and 1 did not answer to the question. So the above results show that the majority of teachers in all seven colleges of Quetta mentioned that they do not know about the function of semester committee. Similarly, in open-ended question, the respondents were asked as a program coordinator what kind of problem they are facing. The followings responses received from all colleges' teachers of Quetta as per figure 11.

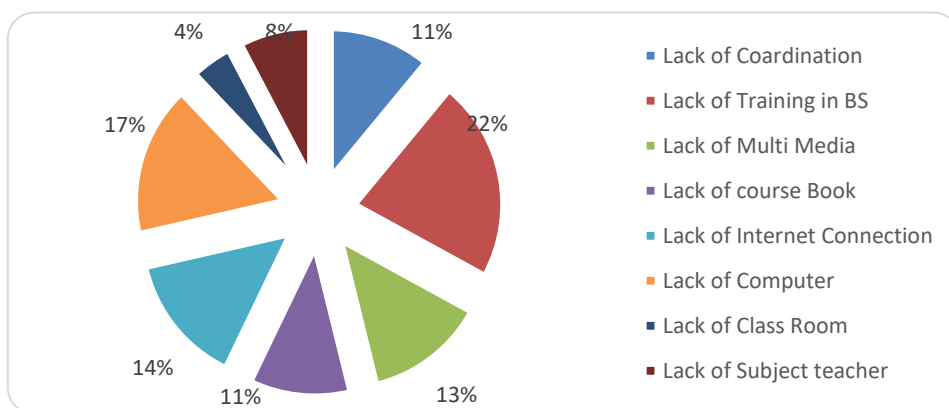


Figure 11. Teachers' Perception about problems face as a ProgramCoordinator

Figure 11 shows the perception of all seven colleges' teacher about the problem they are facing as a program coordinator in the BS program. Out of a total of 124 colleges' teacher, 22% mentioned that they are facing the problem of lack in training, 13% stated that they are facing in problem lack of Multi-Media. 11% stated lack of course Books, 14% mentioned lack of Internet Connection facilities, 17% mentioned lack of computer, 4% mentioned lack of classroom, 8% stated lack of subject teacher and 11% mentioned lack of coordination problem facing as a program coordinator.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The main findings of the study are that the colleges' teachers confront various challenges in the semester system. The main challenges are such as lack of knowledge about semester system, lack of professional development of colleges' teachers, lack of training of teachers regarding semester system, lack of infrastructure, and lack of resources. Similarly, the majority of teachers mentioned that they are facing difficulties in the examination of semester systems such as paper making, grading policy, credit hours, assignment, and research project. Most of the teachers in colleges' use lecture as the traditional methods of teaching, they do not use new techniques and methods of teaching such as group discussion, brainstorming, questioning, and activity based teaching. Most of the teachers mentioned that they are lacking in multimedia, computer, internet facilities, subject books, etc.

Thus, the study recommends that there should be authorized institutions and organizations for the professional development of colleges' teachers and continuous professional development programs developed for college teaching. For this purpose, Balochistan Academy for College Teacher (BACT) be supported as per mandate to communicate training to entire college teacher. The BACT essentially be provided with qualified human resources and funds so that they improve the competency of college teacher related to the semester system.

In line with the prospects and opportunities for university lecturers, scholarships should be acquired for college teachers also to acquire higher degrees such as M.Phil. and Ph.D. Moreover, the colleges are facing the problems in lack of human and financial resources such as lack of infrastructure, lack of faculty teaching staff, lack in the computer, internet facilities, and course books. These resources should be provided to the

colleges, especially for those colleges where the semester system programs are running. Assessment and examination system across colleges need radical improvement; consequently, the Government must take acute steps to streamline these cardinal and critical areas vide the development of standards for paper setting, designing, marking and even administration. Similarly, the training courses may be conducted and developed for this purpose. The ethos of research should be advocated in colleges. For this objective, the pace of research-oriented packages in learning and teaching should be accelerated in colleges' especially in those colleges where the BS programs running colleges. Regular professional workshops and seminars should be assumed on BS program which should acknowledge teachers to exchange ideas and thoughts. These workshops should also offer candidates from another segregate of the country, the colleges, the universities and if possible, teaching staff from other states and countries. In conclusion, a Policy framework is established for coordination between the Directorate of Colleges, colleges and the University of Balochistan to overcome the challenges in the BS program.

References

- Ahmad, I. (2014). Critical Analysis of the Problems of Education in Pakistan: Possible Solutions. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 3(2), 79-84.
- Ali, S. (2017). The sphere of authority: governing education policy in Pakistan amidst global pressures. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 15(2), 217-237.

- Balochistan, G. o. (2015). Education Department. Retrieved from Quetta.
- Balochistan, G. o. (2017). Balochistan Education Sector Plan. Retrieved from Quetta.
- Balochistan, G. o. (2019). Higher and Technical Education. Retrieved from Quetta.
- Haider, S. Z. (2008). Challenges in higher education: Special reference to Pakistan and South Asian developing countries. *Nonpartisan education review*, 4(2).
- Khushik, F., & Diemer, A. (2018). Critical Analysis of Education Policies in Pakistan: A Sustainable Development Perspective. *Social Science Learning Education Journal*, 3(09), 01-16.
- Memon, G. R. (2007). Education in Pakistan: The key issues, problems and the new challenges. *Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 3(1), 47-55.
- Rehman, H., & Khan, N. (2011). Flaws in Pakistan's Educational System. *Abasyn University Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(1).
- Systems, A. (2015). Pakistan Emergency Situational Analysis, District Quetta. Retrieved from Islamabad.
- UNDP (2016). Human development Index, DOI: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/PAK> [Accessed 10 November, 2018].
- UNESCO (2018). Issues and Trends in Education for Sustainable Development, Unesco Publishing.