Perceptions and Practices of Secondary Level English Teachers towards Letter Grading System

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education

In Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English

Submitted by

Balika Devi

Faculty of Education

Tribhuvan University

Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

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RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCEPTANCE

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I recommend this thesis for acceptance.

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ABSTRACT

The present thesis entitled **Perceptions and Practices of Secondary Level English Teachers towards Letter Grading System** is an attempt to explore the secondary level English teachers' perceptions and practices and to find out the problems while implementing letter grading system. Survey research design was used in this study. This is both qualitative and quantitative type of research. To meet the set objectives, 20 secondary level English Language teachers from 14 schools, along with a copy of answer sheet they checked of Kathmandu district were selected. They were selected by using simple random sampling strategy as on this strategy a researcher chooses sample randomly. Each individual has the same probability of being chosen to be a part of a sample. Teachers were also asked to provide a copy of answer sheet they checked in order to observe what they practice. Questionnaire was used as the main tool for extracting the required information. The answers of the respondents were interpreted quantitatively. It was found out that letter grading system address the overall facets of students without any unfair competition. But in practice it is observed that the teachers did not provide grades to their students in their examinations, rather they firstly give the numbers and later the numbers are converted into grades. It is also found out that while providing grades to students, teachers found difficulty in ensuring the accuracy, competitiveness, difficulty in coping with the issues like lack of creativity, lacking innovations in students work, convincing some particular students and parents about the evaluation system and difficulty in giving grades to similar type of students.

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter incorporates background of the study. It also presents statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the key terms. Similarly, the second chapter consists of the review of the theoretical literature, review of empirical literature, implications of review for the study, and conceptual framework. The third unit consists of design of the study, population and sample, sampling procedure, data collection tools and procedures of data collection. In the same way, chapter four consists of analysis and interpretation of the information obtained from the selected respondents. The final fifth chapter deals with summary, conclusion, and implications along with some recommendations.

Table of Content

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acronyms/Abbreviations

T.U   :   Tribhuwan University

NNDSB: Near North District School Board

Et.al   :   and others

CERID: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development

Etc.   :   Etcetera

p.   :   page

GPA   :   Grade Point Average

CDC   :   Curriculum Development Centre

OCE   :   Office of Controller of Examination

NG   :   Not Graded

TPGP   :   Teachers Perceptions of Grading Practices

PSM   :   Perceptions of Student Motivation

FRMS: Fall River Middle School

SERPDC: Southeast Regional Professional Development Centre

i.e.   :   That is

NEB   :   National Education Board

ECA   :   Extra Curricular Activities

SLC   :   School Leaving Certificate

DOE   :   Department of Education

MOE   :   Ministry of Education

Introduction

This chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definition of the key terms.

Background of the Study

Grading is one of the types of evaluation. Evaluation is the process of checking every aspect of a learner using an established set of criteria. It is the process of judging the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent that quality, NNDSB (2011).

Grading is a part of evaluation. It is a tool used in assessing a student performance. There are different types of evaluation. They are formative evaluation, process evaluation, outcome evaluation, economic evaluation, impact evaluation, summative evaluation and goals-based evaluation. As a part of evaluation grading can be said as aprocess of summarizing evaluation-information and assigning a letter or percentage grade on a report card, NNDSB (2011).

Aiming to figure out the perceptions and practices of teachers towards grading this study discusses how the teacher's practices grading in their teaching and what their perceptions towards grading are. Regardless grading as an old-fashioned evaluating tool, modern approach of teaching has initiated to concentrate on exercising grading as a good assessment tool. As a result, it has become crucial to identify how teachers give grades to their students?Do they follow any criteria?Ordothey provide grades personally? If they follow any criteria, which are they? And what are the teacher's perceptions and understandings towards grading? As grading evaluates the students and for this reason the study deals with above mentioned questions, with an eye to accomplish better grading perceptions and practices while examining their students.

Letter grading system (LGS) is one of the modern and highly accepted evaluation system in the field of education. Theoretically, the functions of a grading system is to motivate students to work harder and perform better. It is believed that implementing a letter grading system in assessment will increase teacher accountability. Teacher training is required, and when it is implemented in the

classroom, better results are achieved. Thus, Letter Grading System on the purposes of experiences, attitudes, and understanding of teachers can be used to improve and measure student performance. Teachers see grades as a form of evaluation based on what they can accomplish for individual students. Instead of depending solely on a grading system, many teachers make professional judgments based on their empathy for specific student circumstances, their teaching experience, and their notions of justice, reliability, accuracy, and fairness,Kafle(2020).

The grades and marks that teacher assign to students' papers and record on report cards have long been identified by those in the measurement community as prime examples of unreliable measurement (Brookhart, 1993; Stiggins, Frisbie, & Griswold, 1989) as cited in Guskey (2009). Research shows that teachers who teach the same subject or course at the same grade level in the same school often consider drastically different criteria in assigning grades to students' performance (Cizek, Fitzgerald, &Rachor, 1996; McMillan, Myran, & Workman, 2002) as cited in Guskey(2009).

Guskey (2009) states, every instructor believes that grading pupils' academic performance is both necessary and important. However, most instructors' viewpoints, particularly those at the secondary level, reflect relatively traditional conceptions of grading. Teachers' attitudes on a number of critical grading issues also differed greatly, indicating little agreement or consensus, even among teachers who teach at the same grade level. This could be due to a lack of defined grading standards at the school level, as well as a lack of training on the implications of different grading policies and practices. He added that educators will continue to face challenges in providing students with fair, accurate, and relevant grades. Professional development programs that provide instructors with research-based data on the benefits and drawbacks of various grading policies and procedures will be critical to those efforts, despite their rarity at the moment.

Grading has been a longstanding tradition in education. Since as early as 1792, when William Farish a tutor at Cambridge University established grading as a quantitative method for efficiently teaching and tracking students, grades have become the dominant process for summating and communicating student achievement (Brookhart, 2013) as cited in Deluca et.al (2018). One consistent finding across grading literature is that teachers have variable grading practices that involve

differentially weighting student achievement evidence in relation to non-achievement factors such as student effort, work habits, previous achievement, parental expectations, and grade consequences (Brookhart et al., 2016; McMillan & Nash, 2000; Randall & Engelhard, 2010; Stiggins, Frisbie, & Griswold, 1989) as cited in Deluca et.al (2018).

Grading, a process within the practice of classroom assessment where teachers calculate students' grades for standardized report cards (Tierney, Simon, &Charland, 2011), is an important teachers' professional responsibility. Grades, which result from grading, also play an important role in students' life. They determine students learning paths, scholarships, post-secondary opportunities, and career choice (Tierney, 2015) cited in Isnawati and Saukah(2017).

Isnawati and Saukah (2017) argued that, in the classroom, teachers use a range of grading systems and assessment methods. Non-achievement criteria such as a student's effort and behavior are also taken into account when determining a student's final grade. Both achievement and non-achievement factors interplay flexibly in the process of grading decision making, according to their strong beliefs that assigning grades is not only for measuring the students' ability, but also for making them active users of language, giving them life skills/experience, and motivating the students. To meet the expectations of the school, curriculum, and government educational policies, remedial examinations, more tasks, and grade adjustments are also used to reach the passing grade criterion.

The perceptions and practices of secondary level teachers towards grading also vary according to the knowledge they have about grading. Grading is often perceived as one of the most difficult tasks, Alm and Colnerud (2015).

Hence in the context of Nepal, letter grading is new method of evaluating students it has become important to find out how the teachers perceive letter grading, how the teachers evaluate their students by letter grading, do they receive any formal training on how to implement letter grading, and does they practice what they perceive about the letter grading. Therefore it has become more important for the teachers to get sufficient and useful information about various grading practices to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of grading policies on students in order to

yield better results from students by providing them a fair, accurate and meaningful grade that will help to develop them into eligible professionals.

Statement of the Problem

Letter grading is taken as one of the most effective tools for the student evaluation. Comparing to other methods of evaluation it evaluates students by giving specific alphabets for the marks students obtain. Since letter grading system started in 2016 in Nepal, mostly it is a new concept for the teachers, students and as well as for parents. One should be perfect, trained and knowledgeable enough to use and implement the new practices that one comes to encounter. And as a result it is important to find out what the teachers think about the current letter grading system? It has become most important to find out whether the teachers are providing the grades to their students that they deserve. And the most important problem here is that whether the teachers receive any formal trainings to foster their knowledge on how to give grades, or do the teachers simply give grades according to their own interest? Hence, this proposed research will revolve around the above mentioned problems to find out the teachers perceptions and the way they give grades while evaluating their students.

There are different views on letter grading system. In this regard, Drexlerova et al. (2019) states that, grading is a common occurrence in schools that can have far-reaching consequences for students. Students' perceptions of their own success are shaped by their grades, which can influence their perceptions of their own abilities, future motivation and effort, and, as a result, future achievement. Grading students is a part of a teacher's day-to-day responsibilities. It may be claimed that the issued grades should primarily reflect the students' academic performance, but there is also opportunity for teachers to include the students' overall attitude toward school tasks in the grades.Drexlerova et.al (2019) discovered that teachers judged pupils based on four general criteria: performance, aptitude, effort, and communicativeness.

Similarly, McMillan et al. (2002) points out that, grades have significant implications and serve as a means of communicating student achievement to parents. The most essential aspect in grading students is definitely their academic performance. Many teachers place a high value on non-test performance and conduct, such as effort, involvement, and extra credit work. Teachers, they discovered, require

instruction in how to assess the quality of their own assessments as well as those supplied by others. These findings imply that, even within the same building, teachers weigh different elements differently, and that school and student traits as a whole are less relevant than individual opinions. Classroom assessment and grading techniques are extremely customized, and they can differ significantly from one instructor to the next, even within the same school. Teachers may find it beneficial to address such variations and explore whether more consistency might send a clearer message to students about what is essential.

Regarding this, in the context of Nepal letter grading system was introduced in Nepal since 2015 in SEE of Nepal (CERID, 2016). Grades as an achievement, they are given to students by their teachers, mostly genius students are less appreciated comparing to other students as grades just show a letter as a whole. In the same way teachers give grades to the students based on their own knowledge about grading, teacher's personal interest, and student's attendance, sympathy towards any student, students' behavior, their attitude, their assignments and their performance in class. Though grades have a powerful impact on each student, each and every teacher should be fair and equitable in terms of providing grades so that no student is discriminated, depressed and demotivated only because of their low grades. In order to solve this problem, it has become most important to know how the teachers perceive and practice grading within their classrooms in our country.

Taking all these issues in consideration it can be said that the perceptions and practices of Nepalese teachers towards grading might alsovary fromschool to school or from teachers to teachers. The problem proposed in this study is to find out the variations in teachers beliefs, their grading practices and difficulties in providing the grades to the students. This proposed research will attempt to explore specific perceptions and grading practices of secondary level English teachers towards grading system.

Objective of the Study

This study will have the following objectives:

⟩ To find out English language teachers' perceptions and practices on letter grading system,

⟩ To explore the difficulties faced by teachers while doing letter grading and

⟩ To suggest some pedagogical implications.

Research Questions

This study will have the following research questions:

⟩ How do teachers perceive the letter grading system?

⟩ How do the teachers practice letter grading while evaluating their student's tasks?

⟩ What are the difficulties that the teachers faced while doing letter grading?

Significance of the Study

This research will aim to focus on the different perceptions and practices of teachers towards grading system. Though grading is used as one of the most essential assessment tools for the education system of Nepal: so, the major findings of the research will be useful to all those who are interested in the field of language testing and evaluation. The findings and suggestions derived from this study will be useful for all the teachers, students and policy-makers. Like-wise teachers will also update themselves with the findings of this study that helps them to find out the correct guidelines for providing grades rather than providing grades based on their personal experiences. This work will also be useful as reference material for the research beginners who will be doing research related to this area. It will be helpful for English teachers about how teachers practice the grading while evaluating their students. In this regard teachers will learn the lesson that they should be updated according to time and situation to be a competent one.

Similarly, it would be beneficial to the policy-makers also, to know about existing practices and perceptions of teachers towards grading so that they can

implement appropriate guidelines regarding grading. Thus, this study will broadly be fruitful to the all those who are involved in the field of education. Finally, this study will be significant for the researcher who wants to explore further issues regarding grading system.

Delimitations of the Study

The area of the research will be delimited to Kathmandu district. Likewise, data will be collected through close ended and open-ended questionnaire. This research will be limited in 40 secondary school teachers.

Operational Definition of the Key Terms

Letter Grading: Process of applying alphabets of varying levels of achievement in a course.A letter grading system is one that uses a letter scale, instead of numbers to categorize students into a certain band (denoted by the letter grade) according to their score. A sample letter grading system could look like below, where letter grade and explanation is as follows:

A+ = 90 % and above score

A = 80 % to 89 % score

B+ = 70% to 79 % score

B = 60% to 69 % score

C+ = 50 % to 59% score

C = 40 % to 49% score

D = 35 % to 39 % score

NG = less than 35 % score

Evaluation: The process of judging or calculating the quality, importance, amount or value of something.

Percentage grading: It is the way of using a percentage scale (percent of 100) usually based on percent of point earned on assignments.

Norm- referenced grading: It is the way of comparing students to each other using the class standing as the basis for assigning grades.

Mastery- grading: It is the way of providing words like proficient, advanced, basic, below basic etc., based on the achievement level of students.

Standards- based grading: It is the process of providing grades to the students based on different standards within a topic.

Narrative grading: It involves writing comments about student's achievement either in addition to or instead of using numbers or letters in it.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literatureand Conceptual Framework

This chapter of study consists of the review of the theoretical literature related to assessment, lettergrading system, review of the empirical literature, implications of the review for the study and conceptual framework.

Review of Related Theoretical Literature

Assessment

Assessment refers to the way of evaluating students on the basis of different criteria like their knowledge, academic performance, attendance, assignments etc. it measure students capability, achievement and overall performance to find out how well a student has acquired what he has to. According to Brown (2004) as cited in Ghaicha (2016) "assessment is an act of interpreting information about student performance, collected through any of a multitude of a means or practices" (p. 304). Nitko (1996) as cited in Ghaicha (2016), figured out that educational assessments are used for informing decisions about policy, curriculums and programs and decisions about students. Decisions about students included managing instruction, placing students into program, classifying students, counselling and guidance, selecting students and certifying students. Within managing instructions also it included placing instructional activities, placing students into learning sequences, monitoring students' progress, diagnosing learning difficulties, providing feedback and assigning grades to students.

Letter Grading System

The letter grading system is a widely and newly used method of recognizing the quality of a student's academic performance. It is a type of evaluation where the teacher evaluates a student on the basis of his or her performance by giving specific grades such as A, A+, B, B+, C, C+, D and E. Letter Grading System not only measure the educational achievement but also the other aspects of students like their performance in the class, their assignments and projects, their behavior, neatness, clarity and regularity as well. As a teacher, the teacher should be aware of giving grades to their students what they actually deserve. As a result, measuring the every aspect of a student may be difficult task for a teacher and for this the teacher must be careful about the way they provide grades to their students. The teachers must have sound knowledge on how the nation or education policy has established policies

regarding letter grading rather than merely depending upon their personal and unclear knowledge, they perceive about letter grading. And if the teachers follow an established policy regarding how to grade a student, then only they will be able to practice a better letter grading system that will be fully fair, fruitful and remarkable for the students.

In this context, Guskey (2006) states, grades or marks that inform, especially when accompanied by specific suggestions for development, have significantly more instructional value than those that reduce pupils' sense of self-worth or confidence. Few teachers receive formal training in assigning grades to students' work or grading their performance and achievement. As a result, when asked, most people just reflect on what has been done to them and then strive to design rules and practices that they believe are fair, equitable, defensible, and educationally sound based on their experiences. As a result, their personal experiences as students may have a considerable impact on the policies and procedures they implement.

Similarly, Alm and Colnerud, (2015), says assigning grades is one of the most challenging duties that teachers have, and it frequently has both long- and short-term effects for students and pupils. Despite the fact that most teachers strive to grade their students honestly, many students believe they are subjected to unjust grading. Most teachers do their best to assign grades to the best of their abilities and seek to make their entire process as fair as possible, yet, like any other kind of assessment, grading has flaws. Students' grades can be so deceiving that they are perceived as unfair. The grading process is viewed as unfair when teachers fail to follow criteria for the applicable grading system, use unsuitable information, allow themselves to be influenced by irrelevant variables, or are imprecise in their interactions with students.

Likewise, Olsen and Buchanan (2019), found that the grade or GPA of a student determines whether he or she advances to the next year or must repeat a class or grade, what subsequent courses are available to her, whether or not he or she receives various honors, whether or not he or she requires remediation, and whether or not he or she is allowed to participate in sports or join the band. Today, awarding grades to pupils in class serves a variety of functions. It is a criterion that assesses a student's academic mastery or achievement. It is a teacher's subjective assessment of a student's work or effort, as well as their skill or willingness to follow orders.It's a method of comparing students to one another. It's a motivational tool. It is a control tool.

Similarly different opinions about teachers and pupils and social pressures on the teachers also influence the teachers to provide grades to their students. When teachers fail to follow the guidelines for the applicable grading system, use inappropriate information, allow themselves to be influenced by irrelevant factors or are ambiguous in their communications with pupils, they make their own beliefs'; and practice those perceptions in behaviors' and it becomes a reason for most of the students who are being unfairly graded, Alm&Colnerud (2015).

Thus, after analyzing the above-mentioned views, we can say that the teacher's perceptions and practices towards grading differ from every teacher. Not all teachers follow all the appropriate standards of how to provide grades for students. There are many reasons of teachers the way they provide grades which include insufficient knowledge, relationship between teacher and pupils, memories of teachers themselves as pupils and the way they were graded etc. Similarly, a lack of formal training can lead to teachers own experiences of being graded having an impact on the grading practices they use, Guskey (2006).

Regarding the issues of letter grading system in Nepal, Curriculum Development Center (CDC) and Office of Controller of Examination (OCE) have introduced letter grading system for School Leaving Certificate Examination in 96 of vocational schools from 2072 B.S. But Government of Nepal has phased out the old 2072 directive and introduced the new letter grading system 2078. According to the new grading system 2078, the pass score is 35. Those who achieve less than 35 will fail in the subject – paper.

According to Letter Grading Nirdeshika2078, **New letter grading system 2078 for grade 1 to grade 12 of Nepal – Scores and Grades**

Serial No.	Achieved Score (in %)	Grade Point	Grade	Explanation of Grade
1	90 and more	4.0	A+	Outstanding
2	80 – less than 90	3.6	A	Excellent
3	70 – less than 80	3.2	B+	Very Good
4	60 – less than 70	2.8	B	Good
5	50 – less than 60	2.4	C+	Satisfactory
6	40 – less than 50	2.0	C	Acceptable
7	35 – less than 40	1.6	D	Basic
8	less than 35	–	NG	Not Graded

Thus, it can be said that grading is not an easy task. A teacher must be more knowledgeable, experienced and practiced enough to provide accurate grades for students who deserves that will influence their attitudes towards learning and also helps as a motivation to learn and study which will help themselves to be a better learner and a professional.

Types of Grading

Reddy (2016), mentions that there are 7 different types of grading. They are:

- Percentage Grading- From 0 to 100 percent.
- Letter Grading and Variations- from A grade to F.
- Norm- referenced Grading- Comparing students to each other usually with letter grades.
- Mastery Grading- Grading student sees "masters or passers" when their attainment reaches a pre-specified level.
- Pass/Fail- Using the common scale as Pass/Fail.
- Standards Grading-Comparing student performance to a pre-established standard level of performance.

)   Narrative Grading- Writing comments about students.

Issues in Grading System

Grading system is a worldwide practiced system for labeling the quality of student's academic performance. It converts the score of students into the continuum of grades, which is essential for evaluating and assessingstudents'overall performances.

The main purpose of a grading system is to rate thestudents'performance in such a way that its quality can be determined. As grading system is not only a reporting system for judging the final performance of an academic program, it also ensures the quality of implementation of that particular program, CERID (2016). In this light; according to the narrative report of Proceeding of the National Seminar on Letter Grading System (2016), implementation of grading system in Nepal at Higher Education level may face the following challenges:

)   There is a great challenge for ensuring the reliability and validity of examination system in higher level.

)   Standardized administration of test all over the country is also an area of great challenge.

)   High subjectivity in the preparation and scoring is also a great threat for the implementation of qualitative grading system.

)   Overall, traditional thinking against change always poses threat to any new idea**.**

Phay(2014), slides 5, 6, and 7,8,12 points out that the current grading system has a lot of negative effects on students, like;

)   It causes stress on teachers and parents.

)   It can cause a depression.

)   It makes students to give up their academic achievement.

)   It puts many into a high potential of risks.

)   It impacts on students' grade, behavior and ways of thinking.

)   High school GPA is very difficult to improve.

)   It has made a lot of students felt discourage with an effort they have made.

Advantages and Disadvantages of School's Grading system

Reddy (2016), mentions he following advantages and disadvantages of grading system;

Advantages

Takes the pressure off from the students at certain level:

A student's true score and related marks are not recorded on the official transcript in a general grading system, indicating that their GPA has no bearing on whether they receive a pass or fail grade.

Grading Pattern Description:

One of the key benefits of this strategy is that studious children are readily distinguished from average and below-average students, but this has resulted in the formation and accumulation of strong pressure among students.

Another benefit that this system has brought to the field of education is that it has introduced the concept of assessing students' knowledge based on their internal assignments, projects, ability to answer questions in class, and overall success on all key exams.

Gives the students an obvious idea about their weaknesses and strengths: Students can readily pick where to focus their attention by knowing which subjects are their weak places.

Make class work easier:

If a student understands that achieving a D is adequate to get through the marking division's class assignments portion, he or she will focus solely on getting a D.

Leads to a better gathering of ideas:

Classes or courses that are frequently taught in a classroom setting within the confines of a school are extremely challenging and are viewed as a pass or fail in the strictest sense. This instills in them a sense of accountability to work and train hard in their weak areas.

Disadvantages of grading system in Education

Also, the following points can be considered as worthy of our importance while considering the disadvantage of the grading system in education. They are:

It doesn't instill a sense of competition:

When all that is necessary is a passing grade, we have no desire to outperform others or to exceed in terms of overall grades.

Not an accurate representation of the performance and the knowledge gained:

Passing a test does not imply that a student has obtained a significant amount of knowledge in these areas. An alphabet cannot convey a student's inner knowledge, and there is no simple way to assess a student's degree of performance and knowledge in exams.

It is not an exact scoring system:

If someone is weak in a subject and receives an A or C for all of their attempts, their sense of accomplishment will be drastically different.

Even however, the inner knowledge they get from these grades may be negligible, since they have endeavored to learn without really comprehending the idea in order to receive an A or a C.

Lack of incentives:

Every letter in the traditional letter grade system is thought to provide an incentive to do well, better, or best.Receiving a B may encourage students to put out greater work in order to receive an A, putting them one step closer to receiving the highest grade in the class. Students, on the other hand, will not benefit from the top rank in the class tag. To obtain the tag, pupils will rely solely on rote learning rather than independently investigating and explaining subjects.

Review of Empirical Literature

Some of the related thesis carried out has been reviewed here:

Webster (2011) carried out a research work on the title "High School Grading Practices: Teacher leader's reflections, insights and recommendations". The objective of his study was to explore how teachers view the purposes and practices of grading and how a group of teacher leaders describes desired grading practices and action

sneeded for improvement. He selected 42 teachers from a suburban school district in the Pacific Northwest. He used a mixed methoddesign and gathered data through a document review, a survey, interview and focus groups. The interviews included eight teacher leaders and the focus group included six of the eight interviewed teacher leaders. The document review included a review of policies, procedures and student grades as well. The document review revealed that traditionally marginalized students (including English Language Learners, Hispanic and those with low economic status) had grading patterns with more Fs and fewer as than other students. He also added that teachers were aware of multiple purposes for grades and the inconsistent practices teachers use when they grade. He mentioned that the participants (a)earnestly engage in struggle with grading, (b) worry about the effect of grades, (c) are uncertain and dissatisfied with their grading practices, (d) have little training or support for grading and (e) also desire a more consistent grading system with a clearer focus on academic achievement.

Koloi (2012) conducted research on "Classroom Assessment Practices: A Survey of Botswana Primary and Secondary School Teachers" to investigate assessment practices, skills and beliefs about assessment of primary and secondary school teachers in Botswana. Questionnaire and likert scales were used to measure perceptions about grading practices. He selected some of the teachers that teach at primary, junior and senior secondary levels in Botswana public school. Schools were selected on the basis of convenience sampling method and simple random sampling method. The findings showed that sending teachers for professional development such as workshops in assessment, helps to improve their assessment beliefs, competencies, as well as their use of desirable classroom assessment practices. Also, it showed that having assessment, tests, and measurement topics included in a course is not adequate for changing teacher beliefs about assessment practices. It also added that more than one course in assessment has positive implications for teachers perceived skill and use of classroom assessment practices.

Adrian (2012), carried out the research on "Implementing Standard-Based Grading: Elementary teachers' beliefs, practices and concerns" to find out the extent to which standard-based grading will requires significant change in the grading practices of Franklin Pierce School's elementary teachers. He carried out a mixed-method study for exploring the grading beliefs, practices and concerns of elementary

teachers in a school district preparing to implement standards-based grading and reporting. During this study, her participants who were teachers were participating in book study in order to build a common knowledge base and common vocabulary and standards- based grading practices. Data were collected at both the beginning and end of the book study, through surveys using forced choice and written reports. The study utilized the concurrent triangulation strategy to compare the data and interpret the findings. The participants expressed the need for ongoing collaboration with their peers in order to create and maintain consistency across the district regarding standards-based grading. They shared their need for support in learning how to organize their materials and how to manage their time. Regarding families, teachers wanted to be certain that parents and students will understand the process of standards-based grading, so that they can participate as partners in the process.

Bailey (2012) conducted research on "The relationship between secondary school teachers of grading practices and secondary school teachers' perceptions of student motivation" to examine the relationship between secondary teacher perception of grading practices and secondary teachers' perceptions of student motivation. The researcher used two instruments the Teachers Perceptions of Grading Practices (TPGP) AND THE Perceptions of student motivation (PSM) questionnaire. The participants of this study were drawn from a random sample of 307 high school teachers in four Midwest countries. His study concluded that teachers of different genders, subject areas and experience levels consider a variety of factoring their grading, which includes formal achievement measures and non-achievement measures such as student effort, ability and behavior. He also found out significant differences in mean scores of perceptions between gender, experience levels and subject area taught for both grading practice and student motivation.

Likewise, Wiles (2013) conducted research on "Grading and assessment practices in middle school environment "to find out the perceptions of grading and assessment practices and the impact of increased opportunities for professional development in grading and assessment practices for middle school teachers. He used two survey(pre-survey and post-survey) and a Likert scale to find the responses given by the 22 participants. The participants were from Fll River Middle School (FRMS). He found out that professional development is the primary component for making successful grading and assessment practices. He also found out that professional

development had appositive impact on the FRMS staff's perceptions about grading and assessment practices and supported for the need for strategic, consistent and continuous professional development by highlighting the issues like need for constancy in practice, the inaccuracy of including effort, behaviorand work within a grade and the danger of polluting grade.

Furthermore, Magar (2017) carried research on the topic, "Opinion of Mathematics teachers and students towards letter grading system" to identify the opinion of mathematics teachers and students towards letter grading system and to explore the challenges and opportunities to teachers and students of this system. He carried out survey research using opinionnaire as his research tool. The participants of this study were selected from Gorkha district which included 25 mathematics teachers and 150 students from 15 government schools. The researcher interviewed 5 students and 3 teachers from the sample as well. From the research he found out that, secondary level mathematics students and teachers have positive opinion towards letter grading system. His findings showed that most of the students, teachers and parents have misconceptions misunderstandings and illusionsabout letter grading system due to the lack of knowledge and clear understanding about LGS. He also added that due to the practice of LGS students' dropouts rate decreased, weak students also got level clear certificate and concluded that LGS provided opportunity for students for higher studiesthose who failed in some subjects and excellent in other subjects.

Correspondingly, Gurung (2019) carried outresearch on the topic "Secondary Level English Teachers Perceptions towards Letter Grading Evaluation System" to find out the perceptions of secondary level English teachers, identify the advantages and disadvantages and explore the challenges while implementing LGS. She used survey research where open ended and close ended questionnaire were her research tools. She collected the data from 40 secondary level Englishteachers from 10private and 10 public schools of Kathmandu district. She explored thatLGS is moreeffective and demanding system to ensure and enhance the quality of education in the context of Nepal. Her research showed that LGS provides positive effects on students' self-esteem and leads to better learning environment. She also added that there are much challenges in the implementation of effective grading system like challenges to

motivate students, difficult to teach unwilling students and teachers less practical on letter grading evaluation system.

Similarly, Lee (2019) conducted research on "An Investigation of Teachers between Demographic characteristics of teachers and grading practices" to find out the grading practices of teachers based on their demographic characteristics. She used online survey and interview to collect the data from 40 teachers from 4 districts in the 16 countries that were members of Missouri's Southeast Regional Professional Development Centre (SERPDC). She found out that there are many factors that contributed to their grading practices. There are so many academic and non-academic factors like ability, attendance, attitude, behavior, completion, difficulty level of an assignment etc., but rather than these they also included factors such as teacher's overall beliefs, and values about grading and their administrators. She also found out that teachers did not perform well when they were subjected to strict supervisory support services. She also added that teachers can serve as agents of change in schools and the sustainable system in grading practices that benefits all stakeholders within the educational community.

As the above studies reveal different researches have been carried out mainly to identify meaning and value of traditional grading systems, how teacher's demographic factors affect their practices towards grading and a comparative study between grading and other assessment practices. This study will explore the perceptions and practices of English teachers towards grading system from interviews and questionnaire. This study will be noticeable because the study mainly focuses on how teachers perceive and practice grading in English language teaching and learning classrooms.

Implications of the study

In this study, literature reviews the invaluable implications from selection of the topic and methodology and to derive findings. From the review, I got some insights on the different classroom practices, advantages and disadvantages of grading system and how the teachers across different countries perceive and practice grading system.

In the process of research work, I have gone through different existing literature like past theses, books and articles. The study by Koloi(2012) and Wiles

(2013) gave me the ideas that in order to improve teacher's assessment beliefs and competencies they should be send to workshops, that will build their professional development and assessment practices. Adrian (2012) gave me the ideas that collaboration with the peers and cooperation with families and teachers also play a good role in understanding the process of grading. The paper by Webster (2011), Bailey (2012) gave me the ideas that teacher face a number of problems like; worry about the effect of grades, have little support or training for grading, and are uncertain and dissatisfied with their grading practices and teachers of different gender, subject areas and experience level consider a variety of factors in their grading as well. Likewise, Lee's (2019) paper gave me some ideas on how the demographic characteristics of teachers like (age, experience, and qualifications etc.) effect teachers grading practices.

These scholar's research papers to some extent aided me on the identification and selection of the different topic such as research question, research tools, and research design and so on.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an analytical tool with several variations and contexts. It can be applied in different categories of work where an overall picture is needed. It is used to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas which will be as following:

Grading System

Types of Grading

1. Percentage Grading

2. Letter Grading and variations

3. 4.Norm referenced grading

4. Mastery Grading

5. Pass/ Fail

6. Standards Grading

7. Narrative Grading

Issues in Grading

1. Ensuring the reliability and validity of examination in higher level

2. Strandarsised administration of tests all over the country

3. High subjectivity in item preparatiobn and scoring

4. Traditional thinking against change.

Advantages of Grading

1. Reduced score pressure

2. Easier Studies

3. Make classwork easier

4. Leads to a better rendezvous of ideas

5.Advanced grading patterns

Disadvantages of Grading Patterns

1. Decreased performance

2. Demotivation

3. Increased Lethargy

4. No sense of competition

5. Not an accurate represerntation of performance and knowledge

6. Not an exact scoring system

7. Lack of incentives

Chapter III

Methods and Procedures of the Study

Methodology and procedures are the vital aspects of a research study. If any research work should follow appropriate methodology and procedures then only the research study is accomplished well. Appropriate methodology helps the researchers to go in a right path in his /her research work. This section includes design of study, population, sample and sampling strategy, research tools, sources of data, data collection procedures and ethical consideration.

Design and method of the study

A research design is a set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables specifies in the problem research. It suggests how the received information will be gathered and analyzed. It is believed that not all research designs are necessarily appropriate for all research topics. Thus, I employed survey research design to carry out this study.

Survey research is a new technique for social science research and educational research. It is type of research which tries to study the large and small population by selecting and studying samples in order to accomplish the research purpose. According to Nunan(1978) as cited in Sapkota, the main purpose of survey research is to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes or events at a single point of time". Survey researchin education involves the collection of information from people and surveys based on samples of results obtained from the samples to the population from which samples are drawn. Creswell (2012. P, 376) as cited in Sapkota states that" survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes opinions, behaviors or characteristics of population". According to Cohen et.al (2007) the main features of survey research design can be listed as following:

⟩ It has a wide and inclusive coverage, i.e., we can collect the representative sample as a form of wide coverage and the findings can be generalized.

⟩ It provides inferential and explanatory information.

⟩ It gathers data from multiple choices, closed questions, test scores or observation schedules.

) It generates accurate instruments through their piloting and revision.

) It gathers data which can be processed statistically.

Steps of Survey research

Cohen. L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K., (2007), suggests, define the objective, decide the kind of the survey required, formulate research questions or hypothesis, decide the issues on which to focus, decide the information that is needed to address the issue, decide the sampling required, decide the instrumentation and the metrics required, generate the data collection instruments, decide how the data will be collected, pilot the instruments and refine them, train the interviewer (if appropriate), collect the data, analyze the data and report the results as the steps for a survey research.

Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy

The population of this study was all the secondary level English teachers of Kathmandu district. Similarly, the sample for this study were 20 English language teachers from 5 community schools and 9 institutional schools. I used simple random sampling strategy for this study as in this strategy a researcher chooses sample randomly. Each individual has the same probability of being chosen to be a part of a sample.

Research Tools

The research tools for this study were thechecked answer sheets from the teachers and questionnairescontaining close and open-ended questions. Questionnaire is a form used in survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher. The participant chooses answers and supplies basic, personal or demographic information.

Sources of data

This study was based on both the primary and secondary sources:

Primary sources of data

The primary sources of data in this study were 20 English language teachers at secondary level from Kathmandu valley.

Secondary Sources of Data

Various books such as Sapkota (2017), Cohen, Manion& Morrison (2007) and some of the theses like Webster (2011), Wiles (2013), Gurung (2019), Lee (2019), and Bailey (2012) were used as the secondary data in order to support this study.

Data Collection Procedures

In order to accomplish the primary data collection process of my research study, I applied the following procedures to collect data for my research purpose:

- I selected 14 secondary level schools of Kathmandu District.
- Then I selected English language teachers from each school to up to 20 to collect the data.
- After that I visited the selected schools of Kathmandu district and talked to the authorities with detail information and evidence, and took permission to apply the research tools for collecting data.
- After getting permission from the concerned authority, I selected 20 English teachers to provide the questionnaire.
- Among 20 teachers, one teacher was given the questionnaire through email and he submitted the data through mail.
- And finally, I collected required information from the informants and I thanked them for their cooperation.

Data Analysis Procedures

After collection of the data from teacher,the data were analyzed, interpreted and presented descriptively and systematically with the help of statistical tools. I interpreted and analyzedthe data collected from close-ended questions by usingsimple statistical tool like percentage and tabulated and the data collected from the open-ended questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted descriptively.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical Consideration is one of the most valuable ornaments that I should follow while conducting research work. To accomplish the research work, I considered the ethical value like conducting research by taking permission of authority, keeping the responses of the respondents' secret and avoiding plagiarism.

ChapterIV

Analysis of Data and Interpretation of Results

Letter grading system is a way of determining the grades of students in the form of alphabets rather than numbers. This evaluation system has become helpful for students and teachers in the present context as it diminishes the load of studying hard to get maximum number during the examinations. It has not been a decade in Nepal, letter grading came into practice. And as a result, it became important to find out how the teachers view and perceive the letter grading system and how they practice it, through this research. For this reason, to obtain the information on the perceptions and practices of secondary level English teachers close ended and open-ended questions were used. The information obtained through the close ended and open-ended questions are given below:

To find out the secondary level English teachers' perceptions towards letter grading system, I visited 14 schools for collecting data. 30 items were included in the questionings as close ended and open-ended questions. 17 questions were close-ended and 13 questions were open-ended questions. These two types of questions were analyzed separately. First of all, I analyzed closed-ended questions by using simple statistical tool like percentage and then tabulated it. To analyze the close-ended question, I analyzed 17 items separately and open. Ended question were also interpreted separately which indicated secondary level English teachers' perceptions, towards letter grading system.

Analysis and Interpretation of Close-ended Questions.

The data collected from primary sources have been analyzed and data interpreted in this section. I have analyzed the data both descriptively and statistically. The secondary level English teacher were asked different question in order to collect their perceptions towards letter grading system and they were also asked to give one copy of the answer sheets they checked. Based on the analysis of the data, the interpretation has been made.

Experience in teaching

Firstly, to find out the secondary level Englishteacher's experience in teaching field, the teachers were asked how long they have been in teaching profession. The responses of respondents are presented in the following table:

Table 1

Experience in teaching

Item	Year	No. of teacher	Percentage
Experience in teaching	Below 1 year	-	-
	1-5 Years	3	15%
	6-10 Years	8	40%
	10 Years above	9	45%

The table 1 shows that 15% (3) of teachers have the experience of minimum five years. Similarly, 40% (8) of the teacher have been in teaching profession for 6-10 years and from the findings it can be said that it is found out that nearly 45% (9) of the teachers have the experience in teaching more than 10 years and about 55% (11) of the teachers have the experience of less than 5 years.

Effectiveness of letter grading system

Regarding the effectiveness of letter grading system, the teachers were given a statement concerned with the effectiveness of letter grading as "Letter grading is an effective assessment tool", and their opinions are given below;

Table 2

Effectiveness of letter grading as an assessment tool

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Letter grading is an effective assessment tool	Strongly agree	-	-
	Agree	11	55%
	Neutral	8	40
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Disagree	1	5%

The table no.2 indicates that 55% (11) of the respondents agreed that letter grading is an effective assessment tool. Likewise, 40% (8) of then were neutral to this statement and 5% (1) of them disagreed to this statement. From the result it is found out that the majority of the respondents agreed that letter grading is an effective assessment tool.

Difficulty in giving grades

Considering the difficulty level of giving grades, teachers were asked whether they think giving grades to students is a difficult task. The responses of the teachers are given as;

Table 3

Giving grades is difficult

Item	Response	No. of teachers	Percentages
Giving grade to student is a difficult task.	Strongly agree	2	10%
	Agree	5	25%
	Neutral	3	15%
	Strongly Disagreed	1	5%
	Disagreed	9	45%

The result of the responses item in table 3 indicates that 10% (2) of the respondents strongly agreed that giving grades to students is a difficult task. While 25% (5) of the respondents agreed, 15% (3) of them neutral, 5% (1) of them strongly disagreed and 45% (9) of them disagreed regarding this statement. So it can be said that teachers didn't find giving grades to students as a difficult task.

Comparison to other assessment tools, grading is difficult

With regard to get a comparison of letter grading with other assessment tools, the participants were asked whether they think grading is rather difficult than other assessment tools like giving numbers, classroom observation. The answers of the participants are presented;

Table 4

Grading is difficult than other assessment

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Grading is difficult than other assessment tools like giving marks and classroom observation	Strongly Agreed	1	5%
	Agreed	6	30%
	Neutral	2	10%
	Strongly Agreed	2	10%
	Disagreed	9	45%

The table 4 indicates that 5 % (1) of the respondents strongly agreed that grading is difficult than other assessment tools. Likewise, 30% (6) of them agreed, 10 % (2) of them were neutral, 10% (2) of them strongly disagreed and 45% (9) of them disagreed with the above statement. From the table it is analyzed that most of the teachers doesn't find grading system rather difficult than other assessment tools.

Grades have a strong and lasting effect on student's attitudes, behaviors and motivation to learn.

With a view to grab information about the effect of grades on students, the teachers were asked if the grades have a strong and lasting effect on student's attitudes, behaviors and motivation to learn. They replied as,

Table 5

Effect of grades on students

Item	Response	No. of teacher	Percentage
Effect of grades on student's attitudes, behaviors and motivation.	Strongly agree	1	5%
	Agree	11	55%
	Neutral	5	25%
	Strongly Disagree	1	5%
	Disagreed	2	10%

The table 5 presents that 55% (11) of the respondents strongly agreed that grades have a strong and lasting effect on students' attitudes, behaviors and motivation to learn. Similarly, 5% (1) of them strongly agreed, 25% (5) of them neutral, 5% (1) of the respondent strongly disagreed and 10% (2) of them disagreed regard this statement. Hence it is noticed, the maximum number of respondents believed that grades have a strong and lasting effect on student's attitudes, behaviors and motivation to learn.

Easiness in class works

To find out whether letter grading made the classwork easier, the teacher was asked about the easiness letter grading has made in class works for students. Their responses are given below;

Table 6

Classwork becomes easier through letter grading system

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Letter grading made the classwork easier	Strongly Agree	1	5%
	Agree	14	70%
	Neutral	3	15%
	Strongly Disagree	2	10%
	Disagree	-	-

The data presented in the above table 6 shows that 5% (1) of the respondents strongly agreed that the letter grading made the classwork easier. Similarly, 70% (14) of the respondents agreed, 15% (3) of them seemed to be neutral and 10% (2) of them strongly disagreed to this statement. However, none disagreed with this statement.Therefore, from the table it is found out thatLGS has made the classwork easier for students.

Compulsion for the provision of grading policies and guidelines

To discover whether the schools provide grading policies for teachers, the respondents were asked whether they think schools should have an established grading policies that offer guidelines for teacher for assigning grades. Their opinions are given below:

Table 7

Provisions of grading policies by schools

Item	Response	No. of teachers	Percentage
Schools should have an established grading policies that offer guidelines for teachers for assigning grades.	Strongly Agree	5	25%
	Agree	13	65%
	Neutral	1	5%
	Strongly Disagree	1	5%
	Disagree	-	-

Regarding this statement, the table 7 shows that 25% (5) of the respondents strongly agreed that schools should have the provision and policies that offer guidelines for teachers for assigning grades. Likewise, 65% (13) of the respondents agreed with this statement, 5% (1) of them neutral, 5% (1) of them strongly disagreed and none disagree with this statement. According to this data it is derived that the schools must

have established grading policiesthat offer guidelines for teachers for assigning grades.

Participation in courses and training related to letter grading

Regarding the participation on any course and training related to letter grading, the teachers were asked if they must attend any course or training that gives idea about how to grade. Their views are presented as below;

Table 8

Attendance on courses or training related to letter grading

Item	Response	No. of teachers	Percentage
Teachers must attend any course or training that gives ideas about how to grade.	Strongly agree	7	35%
	Agree	13	65%
	Neutral	-	-
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Disagree	-	-

The table 8 shows that 35% (7) of the respondents strongly agreed that the teachers must attend courses or training that gives ideas on how to grade. While 65% (13) of the respondents agreed in this regard. However, none of them were neutral either strongly disagreed and nor disagreed regarding this statement. So, it is found out that most of the teachers are in a demand of participation in courses and training related to letter grading.

Fairness and justice in providing grades

To gather the opinion of the teachers regarding fairness and justice in letter grading, the teachers were given a statement to collect their perception as, "A teachers must be fair and equitable towards their students in case of giving grades." Their perceptions were mentioned as;

Table 9

Grading should be fair and equitable

Item	Response	No. of teachers	Percentage
Teachers must be fair and equitable towards their students in case of giving grades.	Strongly agree	11	55%
	Agree	9	45
	Neutral	-	-
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Disagree	-	-

The table 9 shows that 55% (11) of the respondents strongly agreed that a teacher must be fair and equitable in terms of providing grades. Moreover 45% (9) among the respondents agreed to this statement. While none of the respondents were neutral, neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed, regarding this statement. So it is concluded that grading must be fair and equitable by the teachers for every students.

Satisfactions of students by their teachers' grades.

For this statement, the teachers were asked whether their students are satisfied with their grading patterns.The visions of the teachers are presented in the following.

Table 10

Students' satisfaction with their teacher's grades

Item	Response	No. of teacher	Percentage
Students are satisfied with their teachers grading patterns.	Strongly agree	4	20%
	Agree	9	45%
	Neutral	6	30%
	Strongly Disagree	1	5%
	Disagree	-	-

The table 10 shows that 20% (4) of the respondent strongly agreed and 45% (9) of the respondents agree that their students are satisfied in their grading pattern. More over 30% (6) of the respondents were neutral and 5 % (1) of them strongly disagreed and none of them disagreed regarding this statement. And from the results it can be argued that majority of the teachers believed that their students are satisfied with their grading patterns.

The tables from 2 to 10 (questions from 2 to 10 can be concluded in the following table):

Number of respondents

Q.N	No. of respondents				
	Strongly Agreed	**Agreed**	**Neutral**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagreed**
2	-	11	8	-	1
3	2	5	3	1	9
4	1	6	2	2	9
5	1	11	5	1	2
6	1	14	3	2	-
7	5	13	1	1	-
8	7	13	-	-	-
9	11	9	-	-	-
10	4	9	6	1	-

Important function of letter grading system.

In order to get classification of teacher on important function of letter grading the teachers were asked what was the most important functionof letter grading for students. The responses from them are mentioned as below:

Table 11

Most Important function of letter grading

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Essential function of letter grading	Assess a student's academic mastery or achievement.	5	25%
	Assess student's work effort, skills as willingness to follow.	9	45%
	Comparing students to one another.	3	15%
	Work as a motivational and control tool.	3	15%

The table 11 shows that according to 25% (5) respondents, assessing a student's academic mastery or achievement is the important function of letter grading. While the majority i.e., 45% (9) of the respondents believe that assessing student's work, effort, skill as well as willingness to follow is the most important function of letter grading. On the other hand, 15% (3) believed that comparing students to one another is the important function and 15% (3) believed that the main function of letter grading is to work as a motivational and control tool. As a result, it is noted that the most important function of letter grading system is to assess a student's work, effort, skill as well as willingness to follow.

Criteria while giving grades

In order to draw the main criteria followed by teaches while giving grades, the participants were questioned which criteria did they followed while giving grades to their students. Their responses are presented as below;

Table 12

Criteria followed by the teachers while giving grades

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Criteria followed by the teachers while giving grades.	Own philosophy of teaching and learning	1	5%
	Accommodating individual differences	-	-
	Student's engagement and motivation	8	4%
	Following the grading pattern and policies	11	55%

The table 12 indicates that 5% (1) of the teachers follow his/her own philosophy of teaching and learning, similarly 40% (8) of the teachers follow on student's engagement and motivation while giving grades and 55% (11) of the respondents follow the criteria of following grading policies and patterns. From the above data it is found out that the teachers follow the grading policies and patterns while giving grades to their students.

Common grading patterns in use

For this content, the teachers were asked which was the most common grading pattern that they follow while giving grades to their students. The responses are given as below;

Table 13

Most common grading pattern in use

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Common grading pattern that teacher follow while giving grades to their students	Percentage Grading	3	15%
	Letter Grading	10	50%
	Pass/Fail Grading	2	10%
	Narrative Grading	5	25%

The table 13 presents that 15% (3) of the respondents uses percentage grading as a grading pattern. Similarly 50% (10) of them used letter grading system, 10% (2) of them used pass/fail grading and 25% of them used narrative grading. The data shows that most of the teachers uses letter grading as the commonly used grading pattern.

Advantages of letter grading system

In order to get clarification on the advantage of letter grading system, the teachers were asked a question as what was the advantage of current letter grading system. The responses of them are mentioned as below;

Table 14

Advantages of current letter grading system

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Advantage of current letter grading system	Takes the pressure off from the students.	2	10%
	Gives the students an obvious idea about theirs weakness and strengths.	3	15%
	Makes classwork easier.	1	5%
	Measures the overall achievement of a student.	14	70%

The table 14 indicates that 10% (2) 0f the teachers believe that letter grading takes the pressure from the students. Similarly, 15% (3) of them believed that grading gives students an obvious idea about their weakness and strengths, while 5% (1) of the respondents believe that grading makes the classwork easier. Moreover 70% (14) of the teachers believe that grading measures the overall achievement of a student. And hence, it can be said that maximum teachers believe in measuring the overall achievement of a student including assignments, project and the performance in a class as the advantage of letter grading system.

Disadvantages of letter grading system

To get an idea about the disadvantage of letter grading system, secondary level English language teachers were asked what was the disadvantage of the current letter grading that they practice. The responses of respondents are presented in following;

Table 15

Disadvantage of current letter grading system that you practice

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Disadvantage of letter grading system that you practice.	Doesn't instill a sense of competition	7	35%
	Not an accurate representation of performance and knowledge gained	5	25%
	Helps to minimize humiliation among students	2	10%
	Not an exact scoring system	6	30%

The table 15 shows that 35% (7) of the respondents believed that the letter grading system doesn't instill a sense of competition. Similarly, 25 % (5) of them hold it as not an accurate representation of knowledge and performance gained while 10% (2) of the participants concluded that grading system helps to minimize humiliation among students as its disadvantage. In the same way 30% (6) of the teacher came to the conclusion that letter grading system is not an exact scoring system. So it is derived that the letter grading doesn't instill a sense of competition as the disadvantage of LGS.

Major problem due to the current grading system.

Regarding the major problem caused by current grading system, the teachers were asked, what was the most important problem due to current grading system. The responses of secondary level English teacher are presented;

Table 16

Major problem due to current letter grading system

Item	Responses	No, of teachers	Percentage
Most important problem due to the current letter grading system	Causes stress on teachers and parents.	4	20%
	Makes students to give up their academic achievement.	6	30%
	Students feel discouraged with an effort they have made.	9	45%
	Can cause a depression among teachers as well as students.	1	5%

The table no. 16 indicates that 20 % (4) of the teachers faced the problem of letter grading as causing stress on teachers and parents. Likewise, 30 % (6) of them opined that the main problem of current letter grading is that it makes students to give up their academic achievement. Moreover, 45 % (9) of the teachers mentioned that students feel discouraged with an effort they have made as the major problem of current letter grading practice. While on the other hand, 5 % (1) believed that current letter grading system can cause a depression among teachers as well as students. From the results it can be said that the major problem faced in current LGS is that it makes students to give up their academic achievement.

Reasons for the students who are unfairly graded by teacher

To explore the reasons for the students who are unfairly being graded by teachers, the participants were askedwhat the teachers thought are the reasons for the students who are unfairly being graded by teachers. The reactions of the teachers are given below;

Table 17

Reasons for the students who are unfairly being graded

Item	Responses	No. of teachers	Percentage
Main cause for the students who are unfairly being graded by the teachers.	When teachers fail to follow applicable grading system	5	25%
	When teachers use inappropriate information	4	20%
	Lack of formal training received by the teachers	8	40%
	When teachers make their own beliefs	3	15%

The result of the responses item in table no. 17Sindicates that 25 % (5) of the respondents believed that when teachers fail to follow the applicable grading system, it causes the reasons for the students who are unfairly being graded by teachers. In the same way, 20 % (4) of the teachers argued that when teachers use inappropriate information, they think that students are unfairly being graded. While 40 % (8) of the respondents believed that it is due to the lack of formal training received by teachers, and 15% (3) of them believed that when teachers make their own beliefs on grading it becomes a reason for the students who are unfairly being graded.Therefore, from the findings it is obtained that it is due to the lack of formal training received by the teachers on LGS, students are being unfairly graded.

Responses and Interpretation of Open-Ended Questions

In order to make the study more authentic and scientific I collected the data from the secondary level English teachers by using open-ended questions. Open ended questions consist 13 questions which were based on secondary level English teachers' perceptions and practices on letter grading system. These questions attempted to identify the various problems, how to deal with those problems and as well as to enlist the challenges and to mention the role of nation for a more consistent grading. In these open-ended questions, the teachers presented their own views and perceptions what they perceived during their teaching learning activities. These questions with teachers' responses are presented as below:

Perceptions on current Letter Grading System

In order to find out the perceptions of the current letter grading system the participants were asked about letter grading and how do they perceive the current LGS.

Regarding this question, the respondents gave following responses: One of the respondents viewed that, it is the reflection of the progression through the learning material that they are being taught at school presented in letter scale. It is the cumulative evaluation of the learner. Another respondent responded that letter grading is the system of evaluating students' performance without using the marks and percentage. Moreover, many English teachers have opined that letter grading is the evaluation of students in terms of A+, A, B+, B, C+, C and D+. While some others view it as an evaluation of student's overall achievement.Similarly, it is also perceived as a system that doesn't demoralize the not so smart students by labelling them as failures. It lightened pressure or load of studying hard (though student and teachers used to work harder). The respondents also considered the current letter grading as quite vague that couldn't include each and every aspect of the learner. They didn't find letter grading as much effective in our context.

Criteria teachers follow while assessing the students on LGS

To find out the criteria teachers follow in grading while assessing their students', teachers were asked as what were the criteria that they follow while assessing their students. Different teachers used different criteria which are explained as:

Through the research, I found that most of the teachers used the criteria of giving grades on the basis of alphabetical letters like A, B, C, D and E, which is also called as 4-point grading system. In this regard one of the respondents mentioned that they followed the criteria determined by National Education Board (NEB). On the other hand, some teachers agreed that they follow the criteria given by authority. Regarding their perceptions on the criteria they follow, the teachers establish a clear grading criterion for assignments and exams as well.

Various problems faced while giving grade to students

As LGS is a new and emerging concept, it may have various problems while practicing, implementing and in the application also. In order to find out the problems faced by teachers of the secondary level they were asked about the various problems

they faced while giving grades to their students. According to the responses from the respondents, the problems teachers faced while giving grades to their students are;Students are unknown about the exact score and most of them get low grade. Teachers feel complicated to judge the behavior of students and found difficult in making calculations in grade. Similarly, students don't get the accurate marks of the obtained. The LGS may not accurately reflect what a student is learning. It is difficult to make students clear about their achievement and performance. Sometimes it becomes complicated to convince particular parents and students feel discouraged with an effort they have made and hence a result they won't dare to be creative or innovative in their assignments. Students of different level are graded the same. Good students and average students get the same grade. In the same way classroom activities and complete participation of students is not focused and students get the grades without much effort.

Addressing the various problems teachers faced while giving grades

Through the research, most of the teachers used the same way to address the various problems they overcome while giving grades. Some of the way teachers address their problems are:

Consulting and counselling with seniors, follow peer discussion among colleagues as well as taking help of books, reference materials and individual counselling to overcome this problem, speak to the students individually about how one is better than other even though he/she has been graded the same and encourage them to improve or to do better, keeping weekly record of the students so the total evaluation during the exam will be easier, evaluate and reflect students learning outcomes, motivate students to excel and reduce students stress so that they can't complain about grade and show proper appreciation by providing detailed feedback and convince students and parents for hard labor without thinking it negatively.

As an English teacher, they perceived that it has become very difficult to categorize the students in certain grade on the basis of marks they obtain. It is also found out that most of the teachers have faced the problem in convincing students and parents about the grades they receive. As a result, students as well as parents also should be counseled about the letter grading for an effective evaluation.

Validity in letter grading measurement

In order to find out the validity of letter grading system tea c hers were asked how well the LGS measures does what you want it to. For this question the response of the teachers was only satisfactory regarding the validity of letter grading measurement. As it does not give the accurate result, some respondents viewed that, to a considerable extent letter grading measures what they want it to. Letter grading gives students a clear idea about their program and motivation to do much better. Similarly, the letter grading system is considered as a good concept as it measures different criteria of a student. It is convenient for the school and a teacher to classify students so that they can address the common issues of the group. While on the other hand, as an English teacher, they perceive and found that letter grading cannot evaluate the exact performance of the student's creating confusion among teachers. Also due to the lack of sufficient knowledge letter grading system seems exhausting sometimes leading them to believe it to a satisfactory, somehow satisfactory, and a considerable extent.

Reliability in LGS

Ensuring the reliability and validity of examination in higher level is a challenging issue in grading. Reliability of an item refers the degree to which the result of measurement, calculation or specification can be depended to be accurate. The participants were asked how did they ensured the way they practiced grading was reliable. Taking the respondents perceptions throughout my research, according to given criteria and following the applicable grading system the teachers ensure that the way they practice grading is reliable. Even though each individual is different, they share common strength to accomplish a task or reach a goal, the teacher makes students ensure that the grade each of them has got is reliable. By doing evaluation inside the classroom, keeping their record of their assignments, analyze different criteria and by applying all the principles of evaluation the respondents ensure that the way they practice grading is reliable. Similarly, reliability is ensured as per the students' performance as well. If the student performs well, they get good grades and if not, not so good grades. As a whole, it is ensured to all that the grading practice is a better practice and reliable since it address overall facets of students without any unfair competition and societal pressure.

Role of letter grading for the standardized administration of test

This question is related to the role of standardized administration of test. Many teachers' opinions were somehow positive towards the role of letter grading. Through the questionnaire they expressed, their perceptions. They believed that standardized administration of a test is for reflection and accuracy which may not be manifested through letter grading only. The principles of standardized administration contradict letter grading; so it has a contradictory role to extract empathy for the students of all sorts. The teachers regarding their views on the role of letter grading argued that letter grading evaluates the quality of a students work. It motivates how the student study, what they focus on and their environment in the course. For the standardized administration of a test LGS's role is to respect everyone's participation in the class by focusing on the improvement of quality and equality education, which helps to reduce the discrimination among students regarding the numbers and percentage as well. It is also found out that letter grading does not only play vital role for the standardized administration of test but its application has brought some modern vibes in test system. Most of the teachers argued that the letter grading plays a significant role in the way that it categorizes students into various ranges and categories in a broader wing instead of individual ranking.

Way of scoring grades for the implementation of qualitative grading system

To get a concept about the scoring of grades, the teachers were asked how did they scored grades for the implementation of qualitative grading system. Regarding the question, the teachers presented different perceptions. They have been using the grading criteria of providing specific word terms for specific letters like A+ for Excellent, A for Good, B for Satisfactory, C for Acceptable and D for Poor based on their classroom performance, extra-curricular activities which include singing, dancing, speaking. They argued that sometimes they do it in a personal way (scoring grades) where an unofficial task was assigned to students and award the students like, "Satisfactory", "Unsatisfactory", "Needs Improvement", "Outstanding" according to the mark range they accomplished. Most of the teachers opinioned that they study different aspects of students like homework, classwork (written, oral), students' engagement and motivation, obtained marks in the exams to score grades for the implementation of qualitative grading system. Through the research it is also found
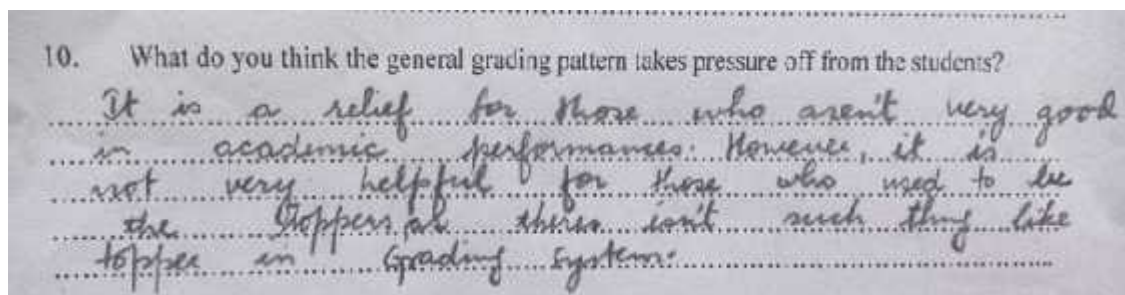
out that the teachers keep the weekly report of the students' homework and classwork assignments for scoring grades. As a whole most of the teachers agreed that they measure different aspects of a student's progress with the help of given criteria of A+, A, B, C, D for the implementation of qualitative grading system.

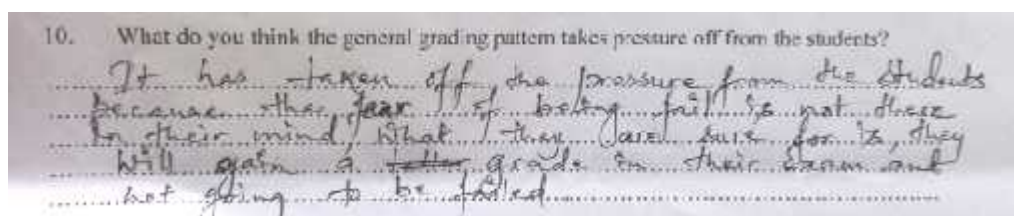**General grading pattern takes the pressure off from the students.**

Regarding this content the teachers were asked whether they think the general grading pattern takes pressure off from the students. For this question some teachers' responses were directly pasted from the data which are shown below:

10. What do you think the general grading pattern takes pressure off from the students?

There is no doubt in the statement that " the general grading pattern takes pressure off from the students". The system really lightens students' pressure/load. They are free to opt for the subject/course of their interest. They have almost no obstacles to pursue their goal. The same used to be a Herculean task, some years back.

10. What do you think the general grading pattern takes pressure off from the students?
It is a relief for those who aren't very good in academic performances. However, it is not very helpful for those who used to be the Toppers as there isn't such thing like topper in Grading System.

10. What do you think the general grading pattern takes pressure off from the students?
It has taken off the pressure from the Students because they fear of being fail is not there in their mind. What they are sure for is, they will gain a better grade in their exam and not going to be failed.

Through my research majority of the respondents agreed that the letter grading system takes the pressure off from the students. According to them the students think that they can pass the exam and do not have the feeling of being failed. The students think that they do not have to compete each other. A student's real score and associated marks are not accounted on the official transcript which will not have effect on pass/fail; mark and hence a result letter grading became less competitive and more flexible. Similarly, LGS makes a difference only because of one mark unlike traditional evaluation system. As an English teacher they perceived and found out that the actualization of learning is a part of student's development, not a part of competition which instills the learner to take the pressure off from the students.

Other aspects that a teacher measures a student's knowledge through grading

In order to find out the other aspects a teacher measures a student's knowledge, the participant teachers were asked what were the other aspects a teacher measures a student's knowledge except examination. The responses of the teachers are given below:
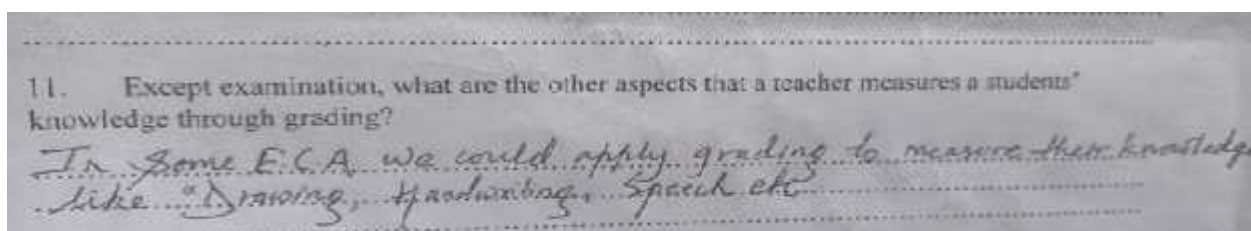
There are different aspects a teacher measures a student's knowledge besides examination. Concerning this question, the teachers answered that they judge participation of students on extra-curricular activities (ECA), attitude and the entire behavior. Different teachers pointed out various aspects that they can measure the knowledge of a student except examination. They measure homework, classwork, attendance, classroom presentation, project-work, discipline, personal skills (behavior and attitude), leadership, punctuality, regularity, assignments, performance in the class, engagement in the classroom activities, efforts of doing something, eagerness towards study, term tests, drawing, handwriting, speech and cleanliness. It is also found out that summative assessments like quizzes, tests and other graded course activities are also used to measure students' performance.

Various issues while giving grades to the students

To find out the various issuesteachers experienced, they were asked a question on the various issues they face while giving grades to their students. Concerning this question, the teachers presented their perceptions as various issues while giving grades to the students as follows;

Letter grading cannot give exact marks which creates confusion and frustration in students. Similarly, according to the participants students are misguided due to LGS which results in the loss of culture. LGS must not reflect what a student is learning, No competition found among students is another issue the participant teachers found.
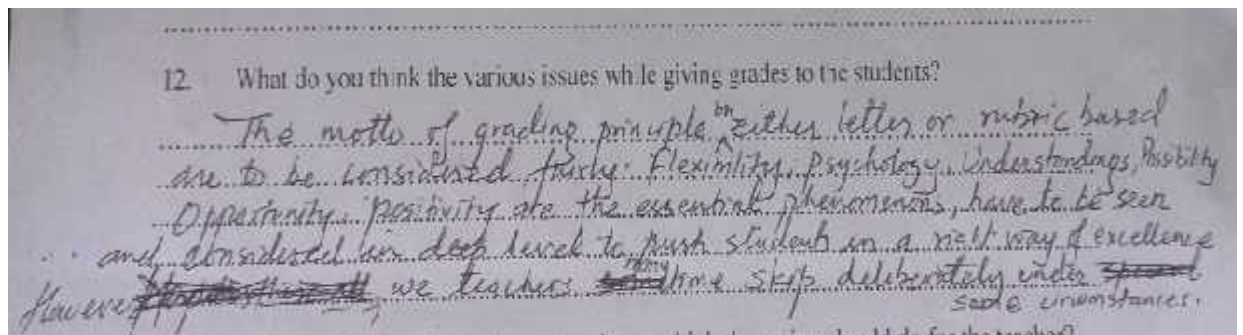
Using a single letter grade to summarize students' performance leads to develop negative impacts on students' performance and interest which leads to high stress, cheating and wrong information.Students are not told pass or fail so they take easily for their study and result and LGS is found as less competitive and not accurate,that discourages the pursuit of knowledge.

Role of nation for a more consistent grading

On the behalf of this concept the participants were asked what a nation must do for a more consistent grading.The teachers presented their perceptions as suggestions as;

For a more consistent grading, the nation should keep training the teachers by encouraging the use of letter grading system, give appropriate information and provide formal training to enact grading criteria, expanding the horizon of the letter grading system and giving proper guidelines can be done, establish clear grading criteria for exams by discussing grading criteria with all grades to align perspectives, and application of mathematically sound approaches can be focused. In Board Exams,

only academic performance is focused, other aspects of learning like ECA, leadership, morality etc. also needs to be included. Orientation, trust on teachers, use of reward and punishment can be focused for a more consistent grading.

FINDINGS

Being based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following results have been derived.

This research attempts to find out the secondary level English teachers' perceptions and practice in letter grading system. The main objectives of the study were; to find out English teachers' perceptions and practice on letter grading system, and to explore difficulties faced by teachers while doing letter grading. After the completion of the analysis and interpretation of data, mainly I found out that most of the participants were positive to accept letter grading as an effective tool. They indicated that the current letter grading has lightened the pressure /load of studying hard, as before the implementation of letter grading students and teachers used to work hard. They expressed that they faced the problems like time consuming, difficulty in counselling parents/ students, complete participation of students as the difficulties faced while doing letter grading.

Furthermore, the major findings of the study were summarized on the basis of above-mentioned objectives which are as follows:

1. Based on the research and data analysis, 55 % (11) of the participants agreed that letter grading is an effective assessment tool, while 5 % (1) of the respondent disagreed and 40 % (8) of the teachers seemed to be neutral regarding this statement.

2. It was found that 25 % (5) of the teachers agreed that giving grades to students is a difficult task. While50 % (10) of them disagreed and 15 % were neutral in this regard. And about 35 % (7) of the English teachers agreed that giving grades to students is a difficult task. From the analysis it is found out that 50% of the teachers disagreed that giving grades is a difficult task.

3. Around 35 % (7) of the English teachers argued that grading is rather difficult than other assessment tools like giving marks, classroom observation etc. And

it was found out that 10 % (2) of the English teachers seemed to be neutral, 30% of the teachers agreed and 50 % (10) of the teachers disagreed that grading is difficult than other assessment tools.

4. Approximately, 60% (12) of the teachers agreed that grades have a strong and lasting effect on students' attitudes, behavior and motivation to learn. But only 15% (3) of them disagreed regarding to this statement. Similarly, 55% (11) of the English teachers agreed that grades have a strong and lasting effect but 25 % (5) of them remained neutral.5.

5. Through the research, 65 % (13) of the English teachers agreed that their students are satisfied with their grading patterns. Although 45 % (9) of them agreed and 30 % (6) of them remained neutral considering this statement. But only 5% of the teachers disagreed that their students are satisfied with their grading pattern.

6. From the research it was found out that LGS has made the classwork easier for students. It is stated on the basis of the data as: 75% (15) of the English teachers agreed that LGS made classwork easier for students and only 10% (2) disagreed against this statement while 15% (3) of the participants were neutral regarding this topic.

7. Regarding the compulsion for the provisions of grading policies and guidelines for teachers for assigning grades it was found out that nearly 90% (18) of the teachers agreed that schools should have an established grading policies that offer guidelines for assigning grades. While 5% (1) were neutral and 5% (1) of them disagreed regarding the compulsion of provisions and policies a teacher must receive from the schools.

8. Concerning the participation of teachers in course and training related to letter grading, it was found out that all the teachers 100% (20) agreed that the teachers must attend courses and trainings that gives ideas about how to grade. No one disagreed and it seems all the teachers are in demand of participation in courses and training related to letter grading.

9. In connection with the justice and fairness while providing grades in letter grading, it was learnt out that almost all the teachers agreed that they should be fair and equitable in terms of providing grades. Around 45% (9)of the teachers agreed in this regard and 55% (11) of them strongly agreed while none of the respondents disagreed neither were neutral.

10. In regard to the most important function of letter grading, majority, i.e., 45% (9) of the respondents noticed assessing student's work, effort, skills and willingness to follow as the major function of letter grading. According to 25% (5) of the respondents, assessing a student's academic mastery or achievement is the major function of letter grading and 15% (3) of them believed comparing students to one another and rest of the 15% (3) discovered LGSas a motivational and control tool as the most important function of letter grading.

11. With regard to the criteria followed by the teachers while giving grades, it was discerned that 55% (11) of the teachers follow the grading policies and patterns and 4 % (8) of the teachers follow the student's engagement and motivation while 5% (1) of them followed their own philosophy of teaching and learning while giving grades. Therefore, it can be said that most of the teachers follow the grading policies and patterns while giving grades to their students.

12. There are different types of grading patterns in use. From the observation of data it can be derived that approximately 50% (10) of the teachers used letter grading as the common grading pattern. Narrative grading was used by 25% (5), percentage grading by the 15% (3) and pass/fail grading by the 10 % (2) participants. Thus, the maximum number of the participants used letter grading as the most common grading practices in use.

13. From the research it was revealed out that there are different advantages of current letter grading system. According to 10% (2) of the teachers, LGS takes the pressure off from the students. While, 15% (3) of the teachers argued that LGS gives the students an obvious idea about their weakness and strengths.Only 5% (1) of the teacher believed that letter grading made the

class work easier while 70% (14) of the teachers perceived measuring the overall achievement of a student including assignments, project and the performance in a class as the major advantage of current letter grading system.

14. It was achieved, around 35% (7) of the respondents believedthat LGS doesn't instill a sense of competition and 30% (6) of the teachers said LGS as not an exact scoring system as the disadvantage of the current letter grading system that they practice. Similarly, 25% (5) of them concluded LGS as not an accurate representation of performance and knowledge they gained as its disadvantage and according to 10 % (2) of the teachers LGS helps to minimize humiliation among students.

15. Furthermore, through the participant's response, it was found out that the major problem due to current LGS is that, students feel discouraged with an effort they have made. While other problems teachers faced due to current LGS include, LGS makes students to give up their academic achievement, causes stress and depression on teachers, parents as well as students, and time consuming.

16. Regarding the perceptions on current letter grading system, it was found that LGS is the reflection of the progression through the learning material that the students are being taught at school presented in letter scale. LGS is also perceived as the system of evaluating student's performance in terms of letters like A, A+, B, B+, C and D as grades, without using the marks and percentage. The respondents also considered the current LGS as a system that doesn't demoralize the weak students by labelling them as failures.Similarly, the study found out that LGS lightened pressure or load of studying hard to get marks (though student and teachers used to work harder.)

17. Through the research it was discovered that teachers used different criteria while assessing their students on LGS. It was observed that most of the teachers use grades on the basis of alphabetical letters like, A, B, C, D and E while one of the participants followed the criteria determined by NEB and a few number of teachers follow the criteria given by the school authority in order to assess their students.

18. While going through the research, teachers encountered various problems while giving grades and some ways to address those problems were also discovered. It was found out that the teachers consult and take counselling with their seniors, follow peer discussion among colleagues by taking help of books, reference ,materials and also speak to the students individually about how one is better than other, encourage the students to improve or do better by keeping weekly record of the students and also motivate students to excel and reduce the students stress so that they can't complain about grade and show proper appreciation by providing detailed feedback and convincing students and parents for hard labor without thinking it negatively.

19. It was noticed that the teachers used different ways for scoring grades for the implementation of qualitative grading system. It was found out that they have been using the grading criteria for providing specific word terms for specific letters like A+ for Excellent, A for Good, B for Satisfactory, C for Acceptable and D for Poor based on the student's classroom performance, extra-curricular activities, homework, class work and students' engagement and motivation in the classroom. As a whole, most of the teachers measure different aspects of a student's progress with the help of given criteria of A, A+, B, B+, C, D and E for the implementation of qualitative grading system.

20. Throughout the research, related to the content whether the grading pattern takes the pressure off from the students, it was derived that letter grading obviously takes the pressure off from the students because in LGS students think that they can pass the exam without being failed and also think that they do not have to compete with each other, which to a greater extent diminishes the pressure of students.

21. Concerning the different aspects, a teacher measures a student's knowledge besides examination in LGS,it was revealed that teachers measure homework, classwork, attendance, classroom presentation, project-work, discipline, personal skills, engagement in the classroom activities, term-tests, drawing, handwriting, speech and cleanliness.

22. In regards to the various issues teachers experienced, while giving grades to the students, it was learnt that LGS cannot give exact marks which creates confusion and frustration in students. Due to LGS, competition within students became less because using a single letter grade to summarize student's performance leads to develop negative impacts on students' performance and interest which later lead to high stress and cheating.

23. Regarding with the concept of role of nation for a more consistent grading, it is obtained that the nation seems to keep training the teachers by encouraging the use of LGS, by giving appropriate information to enact grading criteria, by expanding the horizon of LGS through discussing grading criteria and also by the usage of reward and punishment for the teachers.

Chapter 5
Conclusion and Implications

This chapter included with theconclusions and recommendations derived on the basis of analysis and interpretation of data. It also includes the conclusion of the study along with some points of recommendations to be applicable at different levels. To accomplish the objectives, a survey study was conducted for that I visited 9 institutional and5 government schools of Kathmandu district.

Conclusion

Letter grading system is a globally accepted system as a tool of evaluation in the examinations. On the basis of findings of this study shows that the teachers perceive letter grading tool to evaluate the student's achievement in form of letters rather than points. Even though teachers have a positive attitude toward LGS, they still are in confusion that LGS is a nice concept but, due to the lack of clear concept LGS is not implemented in an effective way. LGS is viewed as a good and ideal concept that doesn't demoralize the weak students by labelling them as failures. As letter grading is a new and emerging concept, teachers encountered various problems while giving grades to their students. It was found out that teachers felt difficulty in making the students clear about their achievement and performance. They also experienced complications to judge the behavior of students as well as found difficulty in making calculation in grade. To overcome these problems, teachers consult with the seniors, have peer discussion, speak to the students individually, motivate students to excel and reduce stress caused by the LGS.Additionally, schools don't provide any trainings, orientation, and awareness for the teachers for a better grading practice. Similarly, criteria to follow in LGS while assessing the students, various problems caused due to LGS, ways to address those problems, validity and reliability in LGS, role of LGS for the standardized administration of test, ways of scoring grades and various issues while giving grades are some of the areas that are not in practice. As a result, secondary level English teachers are in need of formal training programs which will enhance their knowledge, perceptions, and understandings on providing grades to their students. Sound competency over letter grading and proper guidelines related to LGS are some of the most important areas, teachers require for a better grading practice.

Implications

Based on the major findings and conclusion of the study, some points of recommendations to the teachers, policy makers, new researchers and students are made in following three areas:

Policy-related

) For a more consistent grading, the government of Nepal, MOE, DOE should keep training the teachers by encouraging the use of letter grading system.

) The policy makers should conduct orientation program for the expansion of the horizon of the letter grading process by giving proper guidelines on the process.

) Application of mathematically sound approaches must be focused while giving orientation in letter grading because some sets of formulas are used to convert the marks obtained by students into percentage.

) The policy makers should establish a clear grading criterion for exams so that the teachers can follow on the fixed criteria while giving grades.

) Except of academic performance, other aspects of students like ECA, leadership, morality etc. also should be included in national levels of exam.

) Concerned authority should give appropriate information regarding letter grading because sometimes it was found, due to wrong information and knowledge the teachers feel demotivated towards letter grading.

Practice Related

) The school authority should make clear to the students, teachers and parents about letter grading.

) The teachers should be fair and equitable in terms of providing grades to all students.

) The teacher s should develop a feeling of positivity towards letter grading in students.

) Pursuit of learning needs to be encouraged by the teachers.

) Students who receive goof grades must be awarded timely in order to motivate them in learning.

Further research related

This research is survey research. Those researchers who are interested to explore more on this area have been given following recommendations for carrying and further research in the representative area as:

) This research can be beneficial for those who wants to carry out similar type of research further.

) This research only covers the secondary level English teachers' perceptions and practice towards letter grading system from Kathmandu district, which means this study is limited in scope and purpose. So it may not be generalized in all the contexts but other researchers can take help from this research.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear sir/madam,

These questionnaires prepared to draw data of information for the research work entitled "Perceptions and Practices of Secondary level English Teachers towards Letter Grading System" under the supervision of Dr. Tara Datta Bhatta, Professor at the central Department of English Education, Faculty of Education, TU, Kritipur. Therefore, your kind co-operation in responding all the questions will be extremely valuable to fulfill the objectives and to address the research questions of this study. I want to assure that your confidentiality will be strictly preserved without any violence in this work.

Thank you for your interest and participation in this study. I genuinely appreciate your time.

Researcher

Balika Devi

Department of English Education

Tribhuvan University, Kritipur

Date:……………………………

Name:…………………………..

School: …………………………..

Grade/level:……………………...

Appendix I

Close –ended Questionnaire schedule

1. How long have you been in teaching profession?
   a. Below 1 yearb.1-5 yearsc.6-10 years   d.10 years above

2. Letter grading is as an effective assessment tool.
   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   strongly disagree

3. Do you think, is giving grades to students a difficult task?

   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   strongly disagree

4. Do you think, isgrading rather difficult than other assessment tools like giving marks, classroom observation etc.?

Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   strongly disagree

5. Grades have a strong and lasting effect on student's attitudes, behaviors and motivation to learn?
   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   strongly disagree

6. Letter grading has made classwork easier for students?
   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   strongly disagree

7. Do you think, schools should havean established grading policies that offer guidelines for teacher for assigning grades?

   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree

strongly disagree

8. In your opinion, teachers must attended any course or training that gives ideas about how to grade?

   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree

   Strongly disagree

9. A teacher must befair and equitable towards their students in case of giving grades.
   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   strongly disagree

10. Your students are satisfied with your grading patterns?

   Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree

strongly disagree

11. What is the most important function of letter grading for students?
    a. Assesses a student's academic mastery or achievement
    b. Assesses student's work, effort, skill as well as willingness to follow orders
    c. Comparing students to one another
    d. Works as a motivational and control tool

12. Which criteria do you follow while giving grades to your students?
    a. Own philosophy of teaching and learning
    b. Accommodating individual differences.
    c. Student's engagement and motivation.
    d. Following the grading patterns and policies

13. Which is the most common grading pattern that you follow while giving grades to your students?
    a. Percentage Grading (from 0 to 100 percent)
    b. Letter Grading (From A to F)
    c. Pass/ Fail Grading (using the common scale as Pass/Fail)
    d. Narrative Grading (writing comments about students)

14. What is the advantage of current letter grading system?
    a. Takes the pressure off from the students
    b. Gives the students an obvious idea about their weaknesses and strengths
    c. Makes classwork easier
    d. Measure the overall achievement of a student including assignments, projects and the performance in a class.

15. What is the disadvantage of the current letter grading that you practice?
    a. Doesn't instill a sense of competition
    b. Not an accurate representation of the performance and the knowledge gained
    c. Helps to minimize humiliation among students
    d. Not an exact scoring system

16. According to you what is the most important problem due to the current grading system?
    a. Causes stress on teachers and parents.
    b. Makes students to give up their academic achievement.
    c. Students feel discouraged with an effort they have made.
    d. Can cause a depression among teachers as well as students.

17. What do you think are the reasons for the students who are unfairly graded by teachers?
a. When teachers fail to follow the applicable grading system
b. When teachers use inappropriate information
c. Lack of formal training received by the teachers
d. When teachers make their own beliefs

Appendix 2

Open-ended Questionnaire

1.   What is letter grading? How do you perceive the current letter grading system?

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2. What are the criteria that you follow in grading while assessing your students?

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4.   What are the various problems you face while you grade your students?

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5.   How do you address the various problems which you face while giving

grades?

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6.   How well does the letter grading measure what you want it to?

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7.   How do you ensure that the way you practice grading is reliable?

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8.   What is the role of letter grading for the standardized administration of test?

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9.   How do you score grades for the implementation of qualitative grading

system?

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10.   What do you think the general grading pattern takes pressure off from the students?

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11.   Except examination, what are the other aspects that a teacher measures a students' knowledge through grading?

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12.   What do you think the various issues while giving grades to the students?

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13.   For a more consistent grading, what do you think the nation should do for the teacher?

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