

**Secondary Level Students' Perceptions towards Letter Grading
Evaluation System**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education
In Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English**

Submitted by

Arbin Kumar Shahi

Faculty of Education

Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur

Kathmandu, Nepal

2023

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Declaration

I, hereby, declare that to the best of my knowledge this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research to any university.

Date: 15/04/2023

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Recommendation for Acceptance

This is to certify that **Arbin Kumar Shahi** has completed his M.Ed. thesis entitled **Secondary Level Students' Perceptions Towards Letter Grading Evaluation System** under my guidance and supervision.

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Dedication

Affectionately

dedicated to

*My parents who have devoted their whole life to make me
what I am today.*

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Arbin Kumar Shahi

Abstract

The present thesis entitled **Secondary Level Students'**

Perceptionstowards Letter Grading Evaluation System is an

attempt to explore the secondary level students' perceptions to explore the challenges while implementing letter grading system. Survey research design was used in this study. To meet the set objectives, 60 secondary level students from 2 institutional schools and 1 community school of Dhanusadistrict were selected by using purposive non- random sampling strategy. Questionnaire was used as the main tool for eliciting the required information. Both open ended and close ended questions were included in the questionnaire. The study showedthat letter grading system is more effective and demanding system to ensure and enhance the quality of education in the context of Nepal. There is no need to pass all subjects to lead good career and have productive life. The students can choose one specific area on the basis of their ability, capability, level, and obtained score in SEE. Letter Grading System provides positive effects on students' self- esteem and lead better learning environment, and increases holistically in terms of personality. However, letter grading system makes the students lazy, careless and minimizes their creativities, innovative and intelligent skills. Similarly, there is a great challenge for ensuring validity, reliability and effectiveness in evaluation system. Further, parents are less aware of this system and students have misconception on GPA and grades.

This thesis has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter gives an overview of the thesis along with background and context of the study, objectives of the research, rationale of the research, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the key terms whereas, the second chapter contains review of relevant theoretical literature, review of empirical literature, implications of the review of the study and conceptual framework. On the other hand, the third chapter deals with the methods and procedures followed to collect data for this study and instruments used to collect the data. Similarly, the fourth chapter encompasses analysis and

interpretation of the data. It presents the responses of the participants about the issues of the research. Finally, the fifth chapter provides the discussion on the result of the study that was analyzed in Chapter Four. It also contains recommendations for the policy related, practice related and further research related. Finally, in the final section, references and appendix are included.

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List of Abbreviations

SLC	School Living Certificate
SEE	Secondary Education Examination
GCES	General Certificate of Secondary Education
OCE	Office of the Controller of Examination
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
TU	Tribhuvan University
LGS	Letter Grading System
NGS	Numerical Grading System
GPA	Grade Point Average
LGSIF	Letter Grading System Implementation Policy
NESP	National Education System Plan
ELT	English Language Teaching
MOES	Minister of Education and Sports
DEOS	District Education Directorates
CERID	Research Center for Educational Innovation Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
NEB	National Examination Board
SSRP	School Sector Reform Programme

Chapter 1

Introduction

The study is based on the on perception of secondary level students towards letter grading evaluation system in Secondary Education Examination (SEE). This chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, research questions, rational of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the key terms.

Background of the Study

Letter grading system is the newly implemented system in education sector of Nepal. It is also an international practice as well as acceptable aspect in educational system. It is an evaluation system made to evaluate the actual learning ability of the students by giving certain grades. In order to compete internationally through the education, the Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE) had introduced the letter grading system in the SLC result of 2071 B.S. The OCE had awarded nine grades: A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D, E and N to SLC examinees on the basis of marks scored in the examinations. The grade is provided for each subject (LGSIP, 2072). Before implementing letter grading evaluation system, the students had to pass all subjects, those who had not all the subjects, they were not

eligible to admit higher education, job sector and other future career, which hampered the life of students but after implementation of the current letter grading evaluation system, there is no need to pass in all subjects to lead a good life and have a productive career, the students can choose one specific area on the basis of their own ability and obtained scores in SEE examinations.

The OCE states that letter grading system in SEE attempts to produce a perfect citizen whatever they can do on the basis of their ability. This is the most appropriate strategy to achieve the desired benefits, for learning diagnosis and for certification of examination and encourages the student towards learning. In addition that the biggest strength of the letter grading system is that nobody will be failure formally because student are often not mature enough to decide exactly what is wrong and right in this age. If they fail in one subject, they can do better other subjects. For example; one student can be weak in Mathematics but might perform better in English. The primary purpose of the grading system is to measure students' achievement of established learning objectives. The new evaluation system helps the students to reflect their better capability and their performance in their ten years' experience, and directs them towards appropriate subjects for grade 11. Similarly, this system reduces the stress of students

appearing for the exam and they do not have much fear in their grade 10 exams like earlier.

Examination is an instrument or systematic procedures in which a sample of an individual's behavior is obtained, scored and evaluated through using standardized procedures. It is a way of making systematic educational programmes. In education sectors, examination system plays a vital role in improving the quality of education and the teaching learning process. Regarding the examination system.

Grading policies have a direct effect on the grades that students receive, it is extremely important that schools carefully consider what practices best measures students' performance (Reeves, 2008). Grading practices have long be a controversial issue among educators and academics. Through grades are accepts as a standard and inherent part of education system, there is some disagreement as to what exactly is the function of grades. There has been much debate over whether grades should be designed to communicate a student's performance in variety of areas, including behaviour and participation or whether they should just represent a student's proficiency in a given subject. Some educators have even questioned the value of using grades at all, claiming that using extrinsic rewards to reinforce learning teaches students to care more about their performance on assessment than on what they learn (Edwards, 1999).

The grading practices used by many teachers are designed to communicate student's performance in a number of areas, including both academic achievement and behavioral factors such as student effort, conduct and attitude (Allen, 2005). When teachers assign grades, especially final grades, they are communicating a number of messages to students with single mark. According to Zoeckler (2007), teachers often attempt to communicate message that include; level of expectations, level of academic achievement, encouragement and disappointment. Educators often use grades as both a punishment for bad behaviour and a motivational tool for good behaviour (Wormeli, 2006).

Evaluation is the value judgment process of students' entire learning ability and judges the quality of students based on formative and summative ways. Letter grading evaluation system is newly and adopted system in Nepal. In this current situation, I am quite curious how the secondary level students perceive this system. Still, researches have not been conducted on this system. So, I have chosen this topic for my study.

Statement of the Problem

The SLC was held at the end of the secondary education in Nepal. Every year most of the students who appeared in SLC examination become failed. There were many causes of fail in SLC

one of the main causes was failure in English subject. The failure rate of students in English subject was higher than Nepali medium subjects, Kafle (2072), views that due to the many reasons behind failure in English were lack of teachers' knowledge, understanding confident on English, untrained teachers, curriculum and the students also thought that English is difficult subject; it is foreign language, they thought that English is only for brilliant and talented students. The public image towards English subject is also as hard subject. The students had to pass all the subjects in SLC. There were not good futures who had failed in S.L.C. Due to the failure in examination, some students committed suicide, got frustrated, became druggists, grasped negative path in life. To bring reformed such activities of traditional numerical grading evaluation system, the government of Nepal has introduced a new letter grading system in SLC from 2071 B.S., the grades are used instead of marks.

The primary purpose of adopting the letter grading system is to measure students' achievement of established learning objectives. It helps both English teachers and students to reflect better students' capability and their performance in their 10 years' experience, and directs them towards appropriate subjects for grade 11. Similarly, this system reduces the stress of students for the examination and they will not fail formally (LGSIP, 2072). In spite of having positive aspects

of letter grading system in SEE, it has created some problems in the real situation. This system has been criticized in term of students' evaluation because still students, parents and even teachers are confused in evaluation remarks (Kafle, 2072). There is no clear concept about letter grading evaluation system in SEE and also no proper researches conducted that area. Although, this study only attempt to find out how secondary level students'perceived on towards letter grading system. Regarding this statement of the problem different studentswere asked questionsinorder to find out their perception towards letter grading evaluation system in SEE as the real people who are directly involved and influenced by this system.

In this research, I focused on the above given questions. So, this study clearly statedthe issue of letter grading system in SEE. Similarly, different secondary level students perceived the letter grading system in different ways. What they actually perceived, was my another curiosity. So, I took their perception in data analysis part.

Objectives of the Study

This study had the following objectives:-

-) To find out the secondary level Students' perceptionstowards letter grading evaluation system in Secondary Education Examination.

-) To explore the challenges and issues faced by secondary level students in letter grading system.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed throughout the study:

-) How is the letter grading evaluation system perceived by secondary level students?
-) What are the challenges and issues faced by the secondary level students in the letter grading system?

Rationale of the Study

This study expects to make clearly about the letter grading evaluation system in SEE. It is an international practice but it is new concept in educational context of Nepal and it has created lots of misunderstanding on parents, students and even secondary level English language teachers also. It is a contemporary educational issue in Nepal that needs to be clarifying obviously. So this study attempts to reduce such misunderstanding of students, parents, teachers and other concern people about this system. Still, only few research have been conducted on this related topic. That's why, I would like to research in this related field. This research aims at finding out the secondary level Students' perceptions towards the letter grading

evaluation system in SEE. Similarly, attempts to identify the challenges and issues of this system and addresses the contemporary issues regarding this system as well. It will be fruitful to the English language teachers, the students; who are studying in secondary level across the country, the professors, and administrators as well. The finding of the study is helpful to solve the practical and blazing problems among the schools of the country and examination board. Furthermore, the study is the milestone to those people who are interested for conducting further research in this field.

Delimitations of the Study

This study had the following limitations:

-) The area of the study was limited to two private and one government schools from Dhanusha district,
-) The primary data were limited only on 60 secondary level Students 20 Students were selected each school,
-) The study was only presented the secondary level Students' perceptions towards letter grading system,
-) The study was limited to the letter grading evaluation system in SEE, which is implemented by the Office of the Controller of Examination.

-) This study was based on survey research design. Under the survey research design only questionnaire including closed-ended and open-ended questions were the research tools.
-) It was confined to purposive non-random sampling strategy.

Operational Definitions of the Key Terms

The operational meanings of the key terms used in this study are as follows:

Evaluation. Evaluation is a systematic and continuous process of determining how well the goal of education have been accomplished by bringing the change in learners attitude, manner and learning level.

Letter grading evaluation system. a standardized system of classifying/ranking students' achievement on particular grade A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, and E and particular scale such as GPA.

Perception. It is a process by which learners organize and interpret their sensory impression in order to express their understanding, opinion, view, thinking on letter grading evaluation system in Secondary Education Examination.

Secondary Education Examination. It is a final examination in secondary school system of Nepal which is being taken by National Examination Board previously known as School Leaving Certificate.

School Leaving Certificate. It is popularly abbreviated as SLC which is certification of an examination at the end of school level study.

Teachers.A teacher, also called a schoolteacher or formally an educator, is a person who helps students to acquire knowledge, competence, or virtue, via the practice of teaching.

Chapter2

Review of Related Literature and Conceptual Framework

This chapter consists of the review of both theoretical as well as empirical literature. Similarly, it also includes implications of review for the study and conceptual framework. The review has presented as following sections:

Review of Related Theoretical Literature

Research works based on certain theoretical assumptions or principles. This section includes the following theoretical reviews on secondary level Students' perceptions towards letter grading evaluation system in SEE.

English education in Nepal and its challenges. English is one of the largest and most international widely used language. It became a worldwide global language all over the world and in some of the countries; it became official language as well. It functions as an international lingua-franca in different field like international trade, conference, education, business, internet communication, advertising for global bands, research and publication, tourism, and so on. The use of English has grown enormously now-a-days. In this regard, Kachru (1992) draws three concentric circles: the inner circle, outer circle and the expanding circle. He states that inner circle refers to the core

countries in which English is spoken as their first language. The USA, the UK, New Zealand, Canada and Australia fall in this circle. Similarly, outer circle comprises those countries that have institutionalized English in the colonized countries such as India, Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria among others. The expanding circle represents those countries which treat English as a foreign language and use extensively. Nepal falls in the expanding circle of Kachru's concentric division.

Regarding the history of English language teaching in Nepal is about a half a century. Firstly, English entered into the Nepalese education system in 1854 A.D. when the Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana opened Durbar high school in Katmandu (Awasthi, 2003). Earlier education was limited to the royal family members and there were not any public schools across the country. In 1951, English language education opened to the people. Giri (2010), mentions that "English soon became the symbol of status, power and privileges, and a means to divide people into the rulers and the ruled" and Rana enjoyed during their time (p. 93). He furthers says that English only came to formal education in the beginning of twentieth century. Similarly, Malla (1977) note that primarily English began flourishing after 1990 in the changed political context. After restoration of social equality in the nation, Tri-Chandra College started teaching English

courses under the supervision of Patana University, India in the early fifties. The first university of the country, Tribhuvan University, was established in 1959 which gave high priority to its curriculum in English. Further he mentions that a national wide master plan known as The National Education System Plan (NESP 1971-76) was implemented that brought a drastic change in the system of curriculum, textbook, examination and so on from primary to the university levels of education. First, this plan reduced the weight age of English courses (from 200 marks to 100 mark:) set up by earlier system. Second, it reduced the credit hours of English from 15 to 10 from high school to university levels. Meanwhile, the government made its decision to "switch over from English to Nepali" as a medium of instruction in schools. Later in 1981, Tribhuvan University brought a change in the structure of English syllabi allotting weight age of 200 marks instead of 100 to the campus level English. The university also discontinued the semester system and -reintroduced the annual system of teaching and assessment (Mall, 1977).

In Nepal, English language has been regarded as the heart of education planning in government aided schools. It is taught as compulsory subject from class one up to diploma level. In contrast compulsory English course, there are different optional subjects in all the levels. Similarly in the school run by a private sector, English is

taught from nursery level. Except Nepali subjects, all taught in English medium. In the lack of the English language, it is very impossible to get success in higher levels of education.

Although learning English language is more demanding and growing rapidly in Nepal but it has more challenging. There are number of challenges in learning English in terms of curriculum, textbooks, methodologies and use of teaching resources both at schools and colleges levels. Similarly, the major issue in FLT is its environment because there are lacks of English speakers for students to interact with them. According to Awasthi (2003, pp.203-204). some of the major challenges are as follows:

The main issue of English language teaching in Nepal is the lack of adequate English language proficiency of English teachers teaching, from primary to university level.

The findings of the researches carried out so far, mostly by master's degreestudents have not yet been considered for implementation.

There is a lack of co-ordination between/ among the in-service and/or pre service teacher training progammes run by different agencies and institutions.

Availability of materials and access to electronic resources, have been aluxury until now for a large majority of teachers. There is a lack of database of English teachers of all levels of education.

In addition to this, some of the common major challenges of English language teaching in Nepal are such as; lack of teacher training, no sense of professionalism, large classes, mixed-ability classes, mother tongue influences, low students participation, lack of facilities and equipments, unsystematic teaching, not well examination system, lack of strict government policy and so on.

Despite the above challenges, future of English in Nepal is bright. Most of the government-aided schools also started to use English language as an instruction. Modern technology and multi-media drastically change the English classrooms. That obviously, leads to the extension of the scope and horizon of ELT in Nepal.

Historical development of SLC examination in Nepal. SLC was known as "PrabeshikaPariksha" in Nepali language. It was the abbreviated form of School Leaving Certificate. It was one of the most important and popular public examination of the students in the secondary level school system of Nepal before joining higher secondary school, college or university. According to Mathema (2007) SLC was equivalent to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), the academic qualification in UK, and Matriculation in India. The SLC examination

played amenable roles in determining the future prospects of the student. In this regards, Giri, (2005 p. 62) utters that SLC examination has become a major landmark in an individual's life in the Nepalese society. It provides the ladder for one to get on to higher education and also opens up to vista of making his/her own career development. Success in SLC examination plays a decisive role for entering to a campus, making the choice of subjects in higher education, taking part in scholarship competition, job completion and opting for a particular vocation. Similarly, Bhattarai (2014) states that "the SLC examination is a national annual examination administered simultaneously to all grade 10 students within the Nepalese secondary school system. The SLC exam has become locally known as the 'iron-gate' because it is a high-stakes exam which has the power to open the door to further studies and academic careers for those who pass, but keeps those doors shut to students who fail (p, 4)".

Moreover, Mathema (2007) provides the following description of the modern education system in Nepal: The modern education system in Nepal is one of the youngest in the world. In 1951, after the fall of the 104-year rule Rana oligarchy in Nepal, there was only 9,000 pupils in primary, 1,700 in secondary schools and a little over one hundred in two undergraduate colleges. There was no university until 1991 in Nepal and the adult literacy stood at a bare 5% (p. 46).

Before the establishment of the SLC Board in Nepal, the exam was conducted by two Indian universities. For the purpose of conducting the SLC exam which was Durbar High School, the only high school in Nepal at the time, was affiliated with Calcutta University of India in 1880 AD (Nepali year 1936 B.S.) and later with Patna University of India in 1924 AD. The SLC candidates from Nepal had to travel to Calcutta or Patna University to take the SLC exam until the SLC Board was established in 1934. Then students of Nepal began taking the SLC exam locally, however, the entire exam continued to be developed, conducted and controlled by Patna University. At that time, the university prepared the exam questions before sending them to administering in Nepal. The assigned administrators from the university monitored the examination, collected the answer books, had them marked and published the results. It was not until 1947 that the SLC exam was conducted independently by the Government of Nepal itself. Thus, the SLC exam did not formally commence in Nepal until the establishment of the SLC Exam Board in 1934. Since the formal commencement of the SLC exam in Nepal, there have been several changes to the exam's marking scheme, administration, and public image. After establishment of SLC board in Nepal in 1990 B.S., the examination is conducted by the OCE, a government agency of Nepal, government's Ministry of Education. The highest body is the SLC Examination Board chaired by secretary of education, there are nine

members, consisting of 8 administrators from different governmental bodies, an educationist from education field appointed by the MOES. The OCE is the secretariat of the Board. It makes policy decisions regarding the entire SLC process (as cited in Bhattarai, 2014 pp.3-4).

Although, SLC examination was through national but after the political federal structure of Nepal, the SEE is administrated through provincial wise. SLC was an academic qualification awarded in specified subjects by students aged 14 years and above. SLC examination was normally scheduled in every year in April/May even till day. About two and a half months or even three months after the completion of the SLC, the results were published by the Examination Control Board. It was a nationally administered and it was a final board exam after completing 10 years long secondary schooling system. The SLC examinations were generally administered throughout an eight day period in every year and 8 subjects, 6 of which were compulsory subjects: Nepali, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health, Physical Education and Environmental Education. The two other subjects were optional subjects. Each subject carries a full mark of 100 with a pass mark of 32. Students were encouraged to get pass in all 8 subjects. The candidates who appeared in SLC at the first time were called 'regular' examinees. Students who failed in 1 or 2 subjects were allowed to re-appear in the examinations the same

year. These examinations were known as supplementary examinations. In the case of supplementary examinations, the pass mark was 35. Students who failed in more than 3 subjects could re-take examinations the upcoming year. The candidates were known as 'exempted' candidates. The exempted candidates must take the entire papers. Earlier, one could re-take SLC for a maximum of three times. Those failing to pass all eight subjects in three 'tries' were required to re-enroll in grade 10 in their respective schools and appear as regular candidates (Mathema and Bista, 2006).

The pass marks for each subject was 32% (32 marks out of 100). Students that secure more than 80% of full mark received a distinction whereas students that secure minimum 60% to 79% received a first division, 46% to 59% received a second division, 32% to 45% received a passed division and finally below 32% received students were failed in SLC. Traditionally, results were published by government-owned national broad-sheet Gorkhapatra, but now days the students can get their result through mobile-SMS and online system as well. The following table presents the previous mark-sheets of the students in SLC:

Table 1

Previous SLC Grade System

Obtain Interval in Percentage	Percentage	Division
80-100	80% - 100%	Distinction
60-79	60% - 80%	First
45-59	45% - 60%	Second
32-44	32% - 45%	Third
Below 32	Below - 32%	Fail

(Source;MOE,2010)

In the past, the same SLC exam questions were used across all five development regions. However, in recent years, this practice has been changed due to financial considerations and decentralization of the educational system of the country. This change was brought about in order to better accommodate cases of examination cancellation or postponement and reduce the economic burden of exam re-organization throughout the country. The answer sheets of the SLC exam are collected in marking centers assigned by the OCE. The marking centers can be both the REDS and DEOS. Students' achievements were published in numerical grading system. SLC is renamed as SEE from recent academy year of 2072 B.S., whereas grade 10 final exam was known as SLC examination in the past. Meanwhile, the name of SLC exams has been given for the grade 12 following the eighth amendment of the Education Act. The letter grading system is more explained next sub-heading.

Current letter grading system in SEE examination in Nepal. Letter grading system was firstly introduced at Yale University, USA in 1785 aiming to foster an atmosphere of cooperative learning (Durm, 1993). He further states that later another varsity in the USA, William and Merry Collage, classified the grade into four categories in 1817. The grading system gain momentum in many renowned varsities in the west namely Oxford University, Cambridge University and Harvard University, among others. As this system. student scoring 90-100 % is granted A+ equivalent to distinction, scoring 80-99 % is secured A, equivalent to Excellent. Similarly, 60-79% is assessed as B (Very Good) while 40-59% is acknowledged as C (Good) and 25-39 per % is D. So, academic grading in the U.S. commonly takes on the form of five letter grades.

Grading system is a worldwide practiced system for labeling the quality of students' academic performance. By following this system, the government of Nepal, Ministry of Education has introduced and the OCE has implemented the letter grading system firstly in Nepalese education system, particularly in 96 teclinical and vocational schools as pilot phase from 2071B.S. and has been continuing this system in the SLC result from 2072 B.S all over the country in both the technical and general fields of education. The OCE has stated the main mouve behind introduction of letter grading system is to eliminate the concept

of pass and fail and measure students' achievement of established learning objectives (Source; LGSIP, 2072).

Furthermore, the government of Nepal had planned to eliminate about 80 years of traditional SLC numerical grading system of pass-fail and different divisions such as first division, second division and third division all over the country. It had numerous demerits as well. For example, some students who had failed in SLC results, they had committed in suicide, it was one major demerit of numerical system in SLC. As the eight amendment of Education Act has eliminated 10 years practice of country and SLC examination slated to be held at the end of grade 12 as national level exams whereas the examination of grade 10 has known as Secondary Education examination (SEE).

Several academic institutions have been evaluating students by using grading system, but there is no uniformity in different countries. In Nepal, grading system also seems to be an inconsistent in comparison international practices. According to Kafle (2072), there are two systems of letter grading practiced in Nepal: one is Absolute grading system and another one is Relative grading system. In absolute grading system, each point value (GPA) is assigned a letter grade. The OCE has implemented absolute grading system in SEE. Similarly, Relative grading system is dynamic, not fixed passing marks,

especially used in Continuous Assessment System (CAS), NCF has implemented CAS from class 1 to 8, which is relative grading system.

Letter grading system is commonly taken on the form of five letter grades. Traditionally, grades are A, B, C, D, and F. A refers to the highest and F refers to the lowest achievement of students. Similarly, Guskey and Bailey (2001) state that grading is an exercise in professional judgment, collection and evaluation of evidence on students' achievement specified period of time and various types of descriptive information and measurement of students performances are converted into grades that summarize students' accomplishment. In order to assess as fairly as possible, grade must be both valid and reliable. Similarly, Brookhart (1999) says "Grades must be both meaningful and accurate to truly be able to convey the information contained in education as best possible interest of the students and their learning ability. Surmounts to the appropriate audiences" (cited in Karim and Hossain 2014 p. 62).

Generally, grading system may vary from university to university, system to system and between academic disciplines'. Letter grading in education is the process of applying standardized measurements of varying levels of achievements in a course. It can be assigned in letters for instances A, B, C, D, E, and F, as descriptors such as excellent, great, satisfactory, and need more improvement and

students' achievements are measured in GPA. So, in this research, letter grading evaluation system refers to the Secondary Education Examination, held at the end of Grade 10. The Following table presents the new grade sheet of SEE.

Table 2

New Grade Sheet of SEE

New SLC Grading System Of Nepal to be implemented from SEEE Examination of 2072BS(2015/16)			
Obtained Interval in percentage	Grade	Grade Description	GPA
90-100	A+	Outstanding	3.6-4.0
80-89	A	Excellent	3.2-3.6
70-79	B+	Very Good	2.8-3.2
60-69	B	Good	2.4 - 2.8
50-59	C+	Satisfactory	2.0-2.4
40-49	C	Acceptable	1.6-2.0
30-39	D+	Partially- Acceptable	1-2-1.6
20-29	D	Insufficient	0.8-1.2
0-19	E	Very Insufficient	0-0.8
0	N	Not Graded	0

(Source;LGSIP,2072)

Table 2 presents the students' grades in new system inSEE, which based on GPA. GPA and LGS are internationally accepted. GPA is calculated by taking numbers of grade points of students

earned in a given period of time divided by total number of credit taken. Regarding this system in SEE, the performance of students in each subjects are showed in GPA from the range between 0-4. Normally, students have to obtain 1.6 GPA for being eligible in grade 11. The students' scoring GPA between 3.6 -4.0; A+, between 3.2-3.6; A, between 2.8-3.2; B+, 2.4-2.8; B, between 2.0-2.4; C+, between 1.6-2.0; C, between 1.2- 1.6; D+, between 0.8- 1.2; D, and students scoring GPA below 0.8; E grade. Furthermore, grades are as follows: 90-100 marks is A+ (outstanding); 80-89 A (Excellent); 70-79 B+ (very good); 60-67 B (Good); 50 59 C+ (Satisfactory); 40-49 C (Acceptable); 30-39 D+ (Partially Acceptable); 20-29 1) (insufficient): 0-19E(Very insufficient) and 0-N (fot graded). The provision of N. which stands for zero score, if an examinee submits a blank answer sheet or is expelled in the exams or in case of the car didates' absenteeism. So, the grades are used instead of marks.

Noticeably, people have a curiosity; how GPA is find out and how students' achievement are converted in GPA. Therefore, to make clear this confusion and curiosity, this research study attempts to show following way;

First of all, percentage of obtained marks of each subject is calculated. It can be calculated by $(\text{obtained marks}/\text{full marks}) \times 100$. Each subject's mark is assigned a letter grade based on the

percentage obtained. The calculated percentage is mapped into its letter grade. For subject with practical, the final grade is assigned on the basis of total obtained marks.

And these students' obtained percentages are converted into GPA. Here one of the popular methods is to clarify how a percentage may be accurately converted into a GPA, based on a 4.0 scale. By using formula;

$$\text{a) GPA} = X/20 - 1 \quad \text{b) GPA} = 94/20 - 1 \quad \text{c) GPA} = 4.7 - 1 = 3.7$$

Where X means students' obtained percentages. If a student obtained for compulsory English: he/she got in theory 70 and in practical 24 marks, totally got 94% that can be showed as below;

Percentage in Theory: $(70/75) \times 100 = 93.33$	Grade: A+
Percentage in Practical: $(24/25) \times 100 = 96$	Grade: A+
Total Obtained Marks: 94	Grade A+

Source: LGSIP, 2072)

Hence, his/her grade is A+ and GPA is 3.7 which called outstanding in grade description. Students scoring exactly 3.2 are considered as B+ and GPA cannot be converted to percentage. similarly. Tribhuvan University in Nepal had followed the semester system and implemented the letter grading system for master level

from 2070. Following table presents the letter grading system of Tribhuvan University:

Table 3

T.U Grading System

Grade GPA	Percentage Equivalent	Performance Remark
A 4.0	90 and Below	Distinction
A- 3.7	80-89.9	Very Good
B+ 3.3	70-79.9	First Division
B 3.0	60-69.9	Second Division
B- 2.7	50-59.9	Pass in Individual Subject
F 0	Below 50	Fail

(Source; OCE, TU 2072)

Currently propose structure of the education system in Nepal. The eight amendment of education act has brought many changes in schooling system and SL.C examination slated to be held at the end of secondary level that in grade 12. There are two categories of schools; basic (grade 1-8) and secondary (grade 9-12) schools. Previously, we called higher secondary level for grade 11-12 but after the

implementation of Education Act there is no higher secondary school system in Nepal. They are following sub-headings;

Pre-school education. Early childhood development (ECD) education is for children from 3-4 years old. This education includes ECD community and school based centers and pre-primary class. Nursery classes for children below 3 years of age are also offered in both public and private schools.

Basic education. Basic education remains eight years i.e. grade 1-8 and the theoretical entry age is 5. At the basic education level, grade 1-5 is primary school and grade 6-8 is upper primary school. At the end of grade 5, students take school based final examination, administrated by the school management committee and at the end of the grade 8; students sat the district level examination but after the division of province, students take basic level education municipality wise and rural municipality

Secondary education. Secondary education is organized in two cycles: secondary either grade 9 and 10, and higher secondary i.e. grades 11 and 12. At the end of grade 10, students take SEE, which organized by seven provincial, and at the end of grade 12, students involve in higher secondary certificate examination, administered

nation-wide. On the basis of the SSRP, lower secondary is part of basic education and secondary education is covered grades 9-12. The proposed of SSRP intends to introduce vocational education from grade 9 onwards.

Higher education. In higher level education, there are four major fields of studies such as; general, professional, technical and Sanskrit. Universities offer 4 years bachelors (4 years in case of agriculture, engineering, nursing and pharmacy; 5 year in case of veterinary, 5 and half years in medicine). 1 year postgraduate diploma, 2 years master, and 3 years doctoral degree program in several fields.

Advantages of letter grading system in SEE. Every new system in education region keeps positive aspects while adopting at first. Introduction of letter grading system with single subject certification would be a big departure from the existing practice in several ways such as single percentage marks replaced with GPA, composite pass to single subject certification, grade descriptors, etc. (CERID, 2016). This system expects that to relieve pressure of the students about SEE or SLC as like 'Iran gate'. The students might not afraid but become more relaxed and rational. This system removes the students' passed (32 marks) and failed (31marks) system, which is not logistical or scientific in educational zone. One marks system cannot show a large difference in students' ability. Therefore, letter grading system is

all about motivating students to study those subjects in which they are good at. It aims to discourage unhealthy competition while letting students have a certificate without a fail mark, which used to be discouraging for the students in number system.

Disadvantages of letter grading evaluation system. The government of Nepal had eliminated the pass or fail system existed for more than eight decades in Nepal due to numerous demerits. Those students who were weak in studies used to drop out of school and put a full-stop to their scholastic endeavors forever. In fact, it was a scandalous situation for the failures students.

In order to reduce such weakness of pass-fail system, the letter grading system is implemented. However, results without the declaration of pass or fail could act as slow poison for the concerned authorities. This only diminishes the standard of education and create less competitive educational environment and generates psychologically negative attitude on the students. Students think there is no need to study to pass exams because nobody will be failed, and also think both laborious and less laborious or dull students will be passed in the SEE, why they have to study hard? This type of thinking hampers the quality of education (Kafle, 2072). Letter grading system still could not answer the questions like; is scoring an A+ more talented than a student scoring an A? For example, a student who scores 720 marks

(90%) out of 800 full marks in the SLC gets a grade of A+ whereas another student who scores 719 marks (89.875%) gets an A. In here, there is not much difference between an A+ holder and a grade A holder? Can such a distinction of one mark put someone at the summit and another below?

Moreover, in our democratic Nepalese society, only stakeholder, took decisions but there were no proper discussion between students, teachers, parents, or educationists before implementing this system. This system is like autocratic because this system seems to impose compellingly.

Provision of current education and examination system. The eight amendment of education act, (2073) has brought lots of changes in school system. Regarding this education act following are proposed Education system and provision of letter grading system in SEE:

-) Categorizing school education into two levels basic education (1-8) and secondary education Before implementation of education act, there were four levels in school education such as primary level (1-5), lower secondary level (6-8), secondary level (9-10) and higher secondary level (11-12).
-) Scrapping SLC examinations (fragments into grade 10 and grade 12 examination).

-) Transforming HSEB, which regulates higher secondary schools across the country, into NEB, which would conduct the national-level school termination examinations.
-) Barring cooperatives from running schools. The Act would transform HSEB into NEB. With this, SLC examination conducted in grade 10 has been scrapped and national examinations would be conducted in class 12.

The NEB produced the criteria for three board exams: District Board Exam (grade 8), Provincial Exam (grade 10) and National Board Exam (grade 12). The completion of school level education requires passing grade 12, students who drop before that will not be eligible for certain fields. Currently, letter grading system is implemented from grade nursery to grade 12 to evaluate the performance.

Challenges in implementing of letter grading evaluation system. Letter grades are adopted in many developed countries, like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and in the South Asian region. Likely in Nepal, the MOE has decided to use letter grading in SEE as like a fashion similar to foreign countries' education system. Adopting any new system in educations arena is not easy task to accomplish in real situation although keeping well purposed but it is most challenging one. Stating the main motto behind introducing letter grading system in SEE such as to avoid the pass and fail system but still there are

myriad challenges in implementing process. Some educationists claimed that introducing the letter grading system in SLC/SEE by the MOE was ill-prepared, and its implementation part was challenging (Kafle, 2072).

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. It requires a reliable and valid examination system with standardization in test preparation, its administration and standardization in scoring and interpretation of the test score. In this regard, the implementation of grading system in Nepal may face following challenges (CERID, 2016):

-) There is a great challenge for ensuring the reliability and validity of examination system in higher level. Even the lack of "specification grid" for the formation of items poses great threat for the validity of tests used in these examinations.
-) Standardized administration of test all over the country is also an area of great challenge.
-) High subjectivity in item preparation and scoring is also a great threat for the implementation of qualitative grading system.
-) Assurance of uniformity in the implementation of courses in terms of duration of course implementation may pose a threat to the quality of grading system.

-) Availability of human resource for the implementation of gradingsystem
-) Overall, traditional thinking against change always poses threat to any new idea.

Moreover, implementing letter grading system is challenging in such cases; challenges to motivate the students, difficult to explain the grades (80 and 89), the teachers could not be practical on LGS, and parents have less awareness of LGS on their children achievement and students misunderstanding on exams and grades.

Review of Empirical Literature

In the pace of time, various research works have been carried out in various fields. Each and every research work requires the knowledge of previous research background to obtain the targeted objectives and to validate the study.

Likewise, here some related major research works, articles, and books have been reviewed in this study are mentioned below;

Khaniya (1990) has conducted a research on "Examination as Instrument for Educational Change: Investigating the Wash back Effect of Nepalese English Exams". This research study, the researchers drew the wash back effect of the SLC English exam which was based on prescribed textbooks in terms of its content and discrete-point

approach. A new exam of reading, grammar, note taking and writing based on the course objectives of the SLC English course in terms of its content, and integrative-communicative approach in terms of its format was designed to measure English proficiency of the students. The S.L.C. English course intended to develop in students' all-rounded ability of students through language skills and communicative function which are mention in textbook as objectives but the test is only based on text book and previous exam paper oriented in nature. It didn't encourage students to focus on language skills entailed in the course objectives. Finally, he concluded that the secondary level English teachers were not much informative. Only 20 percent teachers used communicative method to teach new English, and English performance of the students was very poor.

Similarly, Giri (1995) carried out a research study on "People's Attitude Towards the Existing SLC Examination in Nepal". The population of the study consisted of six groups of people as like; administrators, headmasters, teachers, students and guardians from Kathmandu and Morang districts. The main objectives of the study were to find out the people attitudes towards SLC examination in Nepal. He used survey research design for collecting data and he found that 44.37% people had good attitude towards the S.L.C.

examination of Nepal, where 55.63 percent of people were not satisfied with it.

Likewise, Michaekudesand Kirshner (2005) conducted their research entitled "Graduate students attitudes towards grading system". This study examined graduate students attitudes towards letter and pass/fail grading system in the law school and the school of education in a selective university in the United States. 54 students completed a questionnaire on goal-orientation amount of effort and stress in each of the two grading environments. Students reported higher orientation towards ability comparison and higher level of effort and stress in letter-graded class.

Mathema and Bista (2006) conducted a research entitled "Determinant of Student Performance in the SLC Examinations". They used survey research design including closed-ended and opened-ended questions. Through this research, they presented a detailed description of the disparities in school-level SLC performance across genders, school types, subjects, regions and districts. They also briefly described the changes in SLC performance of student in various years. The overall objective of this research was to analyze the institutional, financial, technical, pedagogical and socio-cultural dimensions that affect student performance in the SLC examinations.

This study is based on data collected through a nationwide survey of 452 schools and 22,500 students from the SLC batches of 2002, 2003 and 2004. The survey also includes families, 452 head teachers, and 2500 teachers. The collected data include information on each student's SLC performance as well as information on the student's personal, school, and family characteristics that could affect her SLC performance. A multi-stage, stratified random sampling strategy has been used to select the sample for the survey.

Bhattarai (2014), had a thesis entitled "The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Examination of Nepal: Exploring Negative Consequences". The main purpose of this study is to investigate the issues associated with the stakes of the SLC exam, and explore the negative consequences of exam results, then make suggestions about how extreme negative consequences can be minimized and showed what the causes of students' failure in SLC exam and then presented the cause of failures with two broad categories: high-stakes test, and social cultural factors. This research found out numbers of institutional, social, and cultural factors that are responsible for increasing students' suicide rate in every year related to SLC exam results. In phase 1, the qualitative data collected by conducting one-on-one semi-structured interviews with ten stakeholders (two school principals, two teachers, two guardians, and four grade 10 students) about the SLC exam and

in phase 2, questionnaires were administered to 150 grade 10 students in Nepal. Phase 1 findings were validated through statistical analysis of the questionnaire data.

Karim and Hossain (2014) carried out a research study on "Grading Controversies in the Assessment of University Graduates in Bangladesh". This study identified the use of letter grading system instead of numeric marking for assessment in Bangladesh. For this research study, the researchers followed survey research design. There were 15 questions in the questionnaire prepared for students and 13 for teachers. And most of the questions invited same feedback from them. These questions surveyed the views of the participants about grading imbalance, its impact on students and other related issues. The options to the questions were designed following five-point likert-scale ranging from (a) strongly agree to (e) strongly disagree excepting only one question (Q 7) where the five-point scale ranged from (a) very standard to (e) unsatisfactory. Simple random sampling strategy has been applied as sampling procedure. In this search, simple random sampling strategy has been applied as sampling procedure. The participants were 17 teachers and 89 students of different departments from four private universities in Bangladesh. Most of the students (55%) viewed that their institution's grading scale was

standard and teacher participants (53%) strongly agreed that assessment is a very important part of teaching and learning.

Dahal (2015) carried out a research study on "Perception of Stakeholders on Current System of School Leaving Certificate Examination". The objectives of the research were as follows; to find out students' activities in the preparation of S.L.C. Examination, to identify the causes of students' failure in English, and to find out perception of stakeholders' on result of S.L.C. examination. Moreover another objective was to recommend some pedagogical implication. He found out students' activities in the preparation of SLC exam, stakeholders' perception on result of SLC examination and causes of students' failure in English. He studied the perception of secondary level English teachers, students, head teachers as well as DEO and parents of Tehrathum district. He found 68.75% students were spent 5 hours for the preparation of examination and 25% students spent more than 10 hours where as only 6.25% students spent more than 2 hours. He found 75% students were satisfied with the present SLC examination system whereas only 25% students were not. And 75% students were afraid of being failed in final exam whereas 50% students were encouraged and motivated.

Similarly, Gurung (2019) had a thesis entitled "Secondary Level English Teachers' Perception towards Letter Grading Evaluation

System". The main objectives of this thesis were to find out the secondary level English language teacher's perception toward letter grading evaluation system in SEE, to explore the challenges and issues of implementing letter grading system in SEE and to suggest some pedagogical implication. She found out that most of the teachers were positive to the letter grading system in SEE. This research also found out that stakeholders are in confusion regarding implementation of letter grading system also reduces the stress and anxiety in the students regarding SEE and letter grading system motivates the students more effectively in learning more than numerical system. Lastly, she concluded that letter grading system is worldwide practiced system for leveling the quality of students' academic performances. This system attempts to evaluate all rounded ability and capacity of the students and converts the scores of the students into the continuum of grades either A+, A,B+, B.C+, C.D+,D,E and so on. The grade point average (GPA) is assigned the letter grade.

Kafle (2022) conducted a research entitled "Teachers Perception of Letter Grading System and Its Challenges a Qualitative Study in Vyas Municipality of Tanahun". The main objectives of the study were to explore the teachers' perception of letter grading system and identify how to face the major challenges of it. The population of the study consisted of 3 teachers those who were acting as a teaching

professions in secondary schools in Vyas Municipality of Damauli, Tanahun. He conducted research based on phenomenological design and analyzed it on narrative or descriptive method and semi structured in-depth interview protocol tool is employed for collecting data and he found that the letter grading stem has measured the students' competency and cognitive domain on the basis of nine progressive scales in regards to their providing performance opportunity. For his study, it is also found that teachers haven't cleared yet about the concept and its applicability procedure smoothly and there are some challenges about LGS i.e. concept and importance to its implement norms and values of LGs, accountability of teachers and administrators, usability and satisfactory of learners and others.

Implications of the Review for the Study

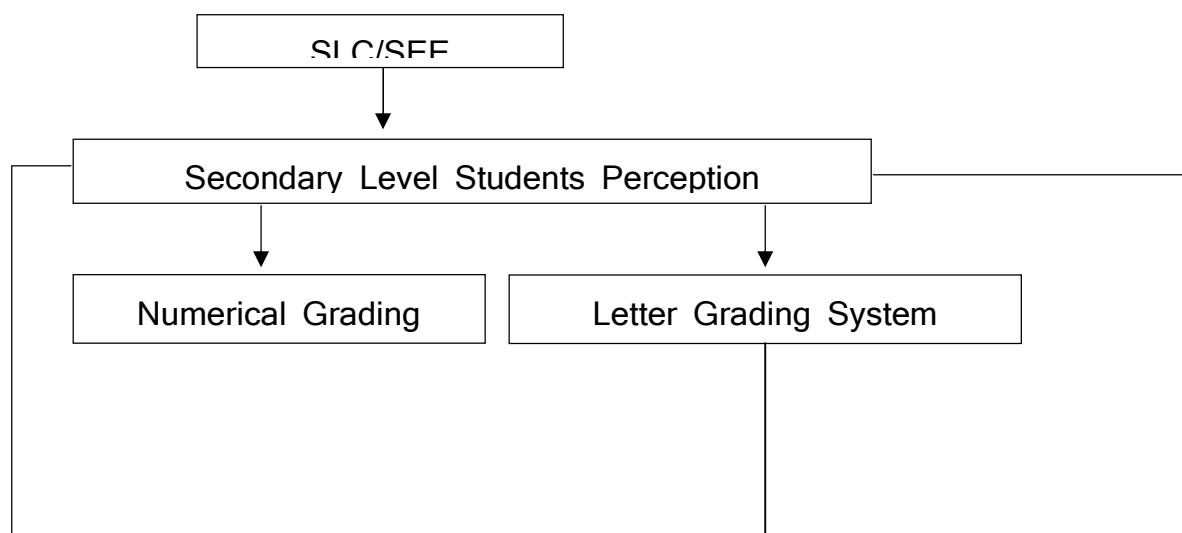
In literature review, the central concern is to examine, explore and evaluate what has been studied before relating this topic and attempt to establish the relevance information in this study. Therefore, for this research paper I have viewed some research works and sources related to letter grading system including books, journals, articles, reports, and different thesis submitted to the department of English education and so on. Honestly, I have visited different websites as well. After reviewing these entire sources and research works helped me to bring clarity and focus on research problem,

improve methodology and contextualize the findings and also got lots of ideas for preparing this research work. It is equally important to examine and evaluate what has been said and what has not been said yet for finding new area for further research.

The aforementioned studies have their own value and importance in their respective field. Regarding the letter grading system in Nepal, no researches have been carried out in this area. So, I think this is new and burning issues of education sector. Therefore, I have selected this topic as my research study.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is the representation of the understanding of the theories by the researcher and his or her conceptualization of the relationship among different variables. It is the visual representation of the presumed relationship of the concept or variable that will involve in the study. The conceptual framework of my study on "Secondary Level English Language Teachers' Perceptions towards Letter Grading System" presented as follows:



Chapter 3

Method and Procedures of Study

Methodology and procedures are the vital elements of a research study. any research work follows appropriate methodology and procures, it obtains its objective. Appropriate methodology helps the researcher to go in the right path in his/his research work. This chapter incorporates design and methodology of the study, population, sample and sampling strategy, study area, sources of data, data collection tools and techniques, data collection procedures and data analysis and interpretation procedures and ethical considerations.

Design and Method of the Study

Research design is the way of investigation that is followed by the researchers while carrying research like experimental, correlation, survey, historical, case study, action research and so on.

I had employed survey research design in order to collect the secondary level students' perceptions towards letter grading system in SEE. In this research, I followed mix- method research design i.e. qualitative and quantitative in general. Survey research is the most popular design of research in social science and education fields. It is quite an old technique largely developed in the eighteen century. It is a study done with the large number of the people and the findings of

survey are generalizable to the whole group. For this reason, I chose survey design in the research study representative of the study population as a whole.

According to Nunan, (2010, p. 140), "Surveys are the most used methods in educational research and may vary in scope from large scale government investigations through to small scale studies carried out by a single researcher. The purpose of survey research is generally to obtain a snapshot of condition, attitudes, and/or events at a single point in time".

Furthermore, Nunan (1992, p 141) suggests the following eight-step procedures of survey research design:

Step 1: Define objectives: What do we want to find out?

Step 2: Identify target population: Who do we want to know about?

Step 3: Literature review: What have others said/discovered about the issue? Step 4: Determine sample: How many subjects should we survey, and how will identify these?

Step 5: Identify survey instruments: How the data will be collected: questionnaires/interview?

Step 6: Design survey procedure: How will the data collection actually be carried out?

Step 7: Identify analytical procedure: How will the data be assembled and analyzed?

Step 8: Determine reporting procedure: How will be written up and presented?

Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy

The sample of my study were sixty secondary level students of three schools in Dhanusha District. Twenty students were from government school and Forty students were from private school. The sample was selected by using purposive non-random sampling strategy as I felt that the purpose of my study would be fulfilled through it.

Data Collection Tools

The questionnaires were the research tools for data collection. It consisted of both close-ended and open-ended questions to find out the secondary level Students' perception towards letter grading evaluation system in SEE. Open-ended questionnaire were used for finding out the subjective response where the respondents can give their opinions freely so that the researcher can have the real data on hands and the closed ended questionnaire were used for limiting the responses of the respondents on a particular questions

Source of Data

Both the primary and the secondary sources of the data were used in this study. Primary Sources: Primary sources of the data were sixty secondary level students.

Secondary Sources: The secondary sources of the data were books, PDF files, policy provisions, published/unpublished thesis, report, articles, journals and websites.

Data Collection Procedures

In order to collect the authentic data, at the beginning, I had visited three schools of Dhanusha district with covering letters for permission. I asked permission from principals of each school. Then, I built good rapport with the students, and inform them about my research and request them for help to fill up my questionnaire and then I provided them to collect information. Then, I collected the questionnaire from the respondents. Finally, I thanked to them for their great help and cooperation. After collecting the data, I analyzed and interpreted the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

After collecting the data from students, data was analyzed, interpreted and presented descriptively and systematically with the help

of statistical tools. The collected data were analyzed by mixed method. Quantitative data were analyzed by using simple statistical tool like percentage and tabulated it and qualitative data were analyzed and interpreted descriptively.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical is the main phenomenon to be considered while doing a research so that the informants' identity may not be collapse. To avoid the risk of plagiarism, I have given proper credit to the authors of books, journal, articles and researcher work.

Researcher should be sensitive in the context of privacy of participant, inform consent & manipulation of data by him/herself. We know that, sensitivity is the main principle in ethical consideration of any kind of research activity. I do not manipulate the collected data but it will be analyzed quantitatively. I do not harm any stake holders of newspaper and editor. I do proper citation and reference to the authors of the books, articles, journals and research works to avoid plagiarism. All the collected data was used for academic purpose only.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This chapter incorporates analysis and interpretation of collected data obtained from primary sources which were from the both government and private schools of secondary level students through the questionnaires like close ended and open ended .The collected data were converted into percentage and kept in table then analyzed and open-ended responses were interpreted descriptively.

To find out the secondary level students' perception towards letter grading system in SEE, I visited three schools for collecting data. The questionnaires were used as data tools. Nineteen items were included in the questionnaire as close-ended and open-ended questions. Thirteen were close-ended and six were open-ended questions. These two types of questions were analyzed and interpreted separately.

Analysis and Interpretation Responses Obtained through Close-ended Questionnaire

The data collected from primary sources have been analyzed and interpreted in this section. I have analyzed the data both descriptively and statistically. The secondary level students were asked different questions in order to collect their perception toward letter

grading system in SEE. Based on the analysis of the data, the interpretation has been made.

Adaption letter grading system. To find out the secondary level English language learners' perception towards the letter grading system in SEE, firstly, I asked such question, "Do you think we should adopt letter grading system in SEE in present context." The responses to the question presented in table 4:

Table4

Adaptation of Letter Grading System In SEE

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Adaptation in LCG SEE in present context	Strongly Agreed	11	18.33
	Agreed	34	56.67
	Neutral	5	8.33
	Disagreed	9	15
	Strongly	1	1.66

	Disagreed		
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The table 4 shows that 18.33% (11) of the respondents strongly agreed that letter grading system should be adopted in SEE in present context. Similarly 56.67% (34) of them agreed this statement, 8.33% (5) of them remained neutral to this statement. Likewise 15% (9) respondents disagreed. The table also shows 75% (45) of the students agreed and 16.66% (10) of them disagreed the statements. It can be concluded that majority of the respondents agreed that this system should be adopted in SEE in present context.

Appropriate of letter grading system.Regarding the appropriateness of letter grading system in SEE, students were asked "Is the letter grading system appropriate for student to secondary level?" The responses of the secondary level students are presented in table 5.

Table 5

Appropriate of Letter Grading System

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter Grading System is appropriate for students for secondary	Strongly Agreed	24	40
	Agreed	21	35
	Neutral	5	8.33

level Education	Disagreed	9	15
	Strongly Disagreed	1	1.66

The table2 indicates that 40% (24) of the respondents strongly agreed that letter grading system is appropriate for secondary level education. Likewise, 35% (21) of them agreed in this regard. 8.33% (5) respondents were neutral to this statements and 15% (9) were disagreed with this statement. In sum, this table shows that 75% (45) of the respondents agreed whereas 16.66% (10) of them disagreed the statement. From the table, we can see that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that letter grading evaluation system is appropriate for students to secondary level education.

Necessity of letter grading evaluation system in education domain. Considering the necessity of letter grading evaluation in education domain, the questions was asked to them as “Do you think, Letter grading evaluation is necessary in education domain?” The reaction of the students are presented in table 6:

Table6

Necessity of Letter Grading System

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading	Strongly Agreed	12	20

system is necessary in education domain	Agreed	31	51.67
	Neutral	12	20
	Disagreed	5	8.33
	Strongly	0	0
	Disagreed		

The result of the responses item in table 6 indicates that 20% (12) of the respondents strongly agreed that the letter grading system is necessary in education domain. 51.67%(31) of the respondents agreed in this regard, 20% (12) of them were neutral, 8.33% (5) of them disagreed. In sum, it is cleared that 71.67% (43) of the respondents agreed the statements but only 8.33% (5) of the respondents disagreed the statement. So, the majority of the respondents were in agreed.

Follow the letter grading system in internal examination as well.In order to find out the use of letter grading system in internal exam in school, I asked them “Do you follow the letter grading evaluation system in internal examination as well?” The answer of the students are presented in table 7:

Table7

Use of Letter Grading System in Internal Exam

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Students should follow the Letter Grading Evaluation System in our internal Examination in school	Strongly Agreed	14	23.33
	Agreed	30	50
	Neutral	3	5
	Disagreed	11	18.33
	Strongly Disagreed	2	3.33

The table 4 indicates that 23.33% (14) of the respondents strongly agreed that the students should be evaluated through letter grading system even in internal examination as well. Likewise 50% (30) of them agreed and 5%(3) of them were neutral in this statements but is 18.33% (11) of them disagreed the evaluating students through letter grading even in internal exam in school. In sum, 73.33% (44) of the students agreed the statement, 21.66% of the students disagreed the statement. In this statement too the maximum respondents agreed.

Students confusion in letter grading system and its policy and provision.In order to get information about the students, confusion in letter grading system and its policy and provision I asked are you still

in confusion about new letter grading system its policy and provision?

They replied as:

Table8

Confusion on letter Grading System, and its Policy and Provision

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
We are still in confusion in letter grading system and its policy and provision	Strongly Agreed	4	7.67
	Agreed	29	48.33
	Neutral	9	15
	Disagreed	16	26.66
	Strongly Disagreed	2	3.33

The above table presents that 7.67%(4) of the respondents strongly agreed that students are still in confusion in letter grading evaluation system in its policy and provision. Similarly, 48.33%(29) of them agreed, 15%(9) of them were neutral, 26.66% (16) of them disagreed. In total 55% (33) of the respondents agreed the statement whereas 30% (18) of the respondents disagreed the statement. This table shows that most of the respondents seemed to be agreed with this statement.

Knowledge of letter grading system on concerned people.To

find out the knowledge about letter grading system, the students were asked such question should the teachers, the students, the parents and the stakeholders have knowledge of letter grading evaluation system. Their responses are given table 9:

Table 9

Knowledge of Letter Grading System on Concerned People

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Teachers, Students, Parents and Stakeholders should have knowledge of letter grading system	Strongly Agreed	19	31.66
	Agreed	21	35
	Neutral	7	11.66
	Disagreed	12	20
	Strongly Disagreed	1	1.66

The data presented in the table 9 shows that 31.66%(19) of respondents strongly agreed that the teachers, students, parents and stakeholders should have knowledge of letter grading system. Similarly, 35%(21) of them agreed and 11.66%(7) of them seem to be neutral in this statements and 20%(12) respondents disagreed with this statement.In total, 66.67% (40) of the respondents agreed the

statements but 21.67% (13) of the respondents disagreed in this regard. The table also shows that most of the respondents agreed regarding this statement.

Effectiveness of letter grading system in SEE. Effectiveness of letter grading system is main theme of this research, in order to discover the effectiveness of letter grading system, I give related statement “letter grading system is more effective and demanding system to enhance quality of education.” Their response are given below;

Table10

Effectiveness of Letter Grading System

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system is more effective and demanding system to enhance quality of education	Strongly Agreed	15	25
	Agreed	26	43.33
	Neutral	13	21.67
	Disagreed	5	8.33
	Strongly Disagreed	1	1.66

Regarding this statement, the table 10 shows that 25%(15) of them respondents strongly agreed that letter grading system is more effective and demanding system to enhance quality of education.

Likewise 43.33% (26) of them agreed with this statements 21%(13) of them were neutral, 8.33%(5) of the respondents disagreed. Total 68.33% (41) of the respondents agreed the statements whereas only 10% (6) students disagreed the statements. This table also shows that most of the respondents agreed with above statement.

Letter grading system reduces the stress and anxiety in the students.Regarding the advantages of letter grading system they were given a statements to get their views such as “The current letter grading system reduces the stress and anxiety in students regarding SEE examination“ Their views are presented in table 11:

Table11

Reduces Stress and Anxiety through Letter Grading System

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system reduces the stress and anxiety in the students regarding SEE	Strongly Agreed	18	30
	Agreed	23	38.33
	Neutral	8	13.33
	Disagreed	8	13.33
	Strongly Disagreed	3	5

The table 11 shows that 30%(18) of the respondents strongly agreed that the letter grading system reduces the stress and anxiety

in the students regarding SEE, similarly 38%(23) of them agreed in this regard. But 13.33% (8) and 13.33% (8) of respondents of them were neutral and disagreed regarding the statement. Even in this table 68.33% (41) of the students agreed the statement but only 18.33 (11) of them disagreed the statement. The table presents that most of the respondents agreed with above the statement.

Motivation of letter grading system is greater than in numerical system. To find out the opinion of the students regarding letter grading system on the basis of motivation, they were given that statement to collect their perception as, “ Letter grading system motivate the students more effectively in learning rather than numerical system.” Their perception were mentioned as follows;

Table 12

Letter Grading System Motivates the Students

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system motivates the students more effectively in	Strongly Agreed	12	20
	Agreed	34	56.67
	Neutral	5	8.33
	Disagreed	6	10
	Strongly Disagreed	3	5

The table 9 shows that 20%(12) of the respondents strongly agreed that letter grading system motivates the students more in learning than numerical system. Similarly 56.67% (34) of the respondents agreed, 8.33%(5) of them were neutral 10%(6) of the respondents strongly disagreed. In sum 76.67% (46) of the students agreed the statement but 15% (9) students disagreed the statement.

Letter grading system prepares the students for existing in 'the real world'.For this statement, the students were provided the statements like, "Letter grading evaluation system prepares us for existing 'the real world'." The vision of the students are presented in table 13:

Table13

Letter Grading System Prepares the Students for Existing in 'the Real World

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system prepares the students for existing the real	Strongly Agreed	6	10
	Agreed	24	40
	Neutral	16	26.66
	Disagreed	9	15

world	Strongly Disagreed	5	8.33
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The table 10 shows that 10%(6) of the respondents were strongly agreed that letter grading system prepares the students. For existing the real world and 40%(24) of the respondents agreed that statement. Similarly 26.66%(16) of the respondents were neutral, 15%(9) of them a disagreed and 50% (30) of the respondents agreed the statement and 23.33% (14) of them disagreed the statement.

Letter grading system evaluates the students actual ability.To grasp the students attitude towards letter grading system. I asked, “ Letter grading system should be adopted in SEE to evaluate the students actual ability.” Their attitudes are presented as below:

Table 14

Letter Grading System Evaluates Students Actual Ability

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system should adopt in SEE to evaluate students actual ability	Strongly Agreed	9	15
	Agreed	35	58.33
	Neutral	8	13.33
	Disagreed	6	10
	Strongly Disagreed	2	3.33

The table 14 shows 15%(9) of the respondents strongly agreed that the letter grading system should be adopted in SEE to evaluate students actual ability. Similarly 58.33%(35) of the respondents agreed, 13.33%(8) of them were neutral, 10%(6) of them disagreed and 73.33% (44) of the students agreed regarding the statement whereas 13.33% (8) of them disagreed the statement.

Letter grading system has some negative influences in education sectors.In order to draw the negative aspect of letter grading system, I gave them statement as “Grading system has some negative influences towards educational sector” Their response are presented as below.

Table15

Negative Influences of Letter Grading System

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system has some negative influence toward educational sector	Strongly Agreed	6	10
	Agreed	24	40
	Neutral	7	11.66
	Disagreed	21	35
	Strongly Disagreed	2	3.33

The table 15 indicates that 10%(6) of the respondents were strongly agreed that the letter grading system has some negatives influence towards educational sector. Similarly 40%(24) of the respondents agreed, 11.66%(7) of them were neutral, 35%(21) of them disagreed and 50% (30) of the students agreed regarding the statement whereas 38.33% (23) of them disagreed the statement. The table shows that most of the respondents seemed to be agreed regarding the letter grading system which carries negatives influence toward educational sector.

Letter grading system decreases students learning

outcome.For that statements, I gave them statements as “Letter grading system decrease the students learning outcomes”. The responses are given below.

Table16

Letter Grading System Hampers Students Learning Outcomes

Items	Responses	No. of students	Percentage
Letter grading system is necessary in education domain	Strongly Agreed	12	20
	Agreed	23	38.32
	Neutral	9	15
	Disagreed	12	20
	Strongly Disagreed	4	6.67

The table 13 presents that 20%(12) of the respondents strongly agreed that the letter grading system decreases students learning outcome. Likewise, 38.32% (23) of the respondents agreed, 15%(9) of them were neutral 20%(12) of them disagreed the statement and 58% (35) of the students agreed regarding the statement whereas 26.67% (16) of them disagreed the statement.. The table shows that most of the respondents agreed with the statements that the letter grading system decreases students learning outcomes.

Above table from 1 to 13 tables (questions from 1 to 13 can concluded as following table:)

Table 17

Number of Respondents

S.N	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
1	11	34	5	9	1
2	24	21	5	9	1
3	12	31	12	5	0
4	14	30	3	11	2
5	4	29	9	16	2
6	19	21	7	12	1
7	15	26	13	5	1
8	18	23	8	8	3
9	12	34	5	6	3
10	6	24	16	9	5

11	9	35	8	6	2
12	6	24	7	21	2
13	12	23	9	12	4

Analysis of Responses Obtained through Open- ended Questionnaire

In order to make the study more authentic and scientific, I collected the data from the secondary level students by using open-ended questions. Open-ended questions consisted of questions which were based on students' perception towards letter grading system in SEE. These questions attempted to identify necessities, usefulness of letter grading evaluation system. Similarly, these questions also intended to clarify the sorts of problems while implementing letter grading system in SEE.

In this open-ended questions the students presented their own views and perceptions what they perceived during their teaching learning activities. In fact the student's perceptions helped to find out my research objective regarding letter grading system. These questions with the response of student are presented as below:

Necessity of grading system. Regarding this question, the respondents gave following responses: one of the students 'A' viewed that letter grading system is necessary as there is not discrimination between numbers obtained by the students 81% and 91% because both come under 'A' grade. Many students had opinioned that letter

grading evaluation system is necessary to adjust present competitive era enhancing the actual ability of the students in each subjects and reducing the failure percentage. But some of the students were on the oppose of the necessities of letter grading system. They had understand that due to the provision of 'no fail' students are becoming dull and lazy in doing homework and hard work for exam which has reduced thinking, learning and practicing habits of the students. So it has killed the creativity of the students.

Difference between numerical system and grading

system.Through the research mostly students were agreed that letter grading system differs from numerical grading evaluation system. Regarding their perception LGS focuses on evaluating students' actual ability and level whereas numerical grading system focused on who got high marks or who was better than whom? In numerical grading system students were demotivated and felt fear in examination but letter grading makes student feel free from tension of passing in exam. On the other hand, some students agreed that there is not so difference between LGS and numerical grading system. Instead of numerical value there is letter only and GPA instead of division.

Usefulness of letter grading system than numerical

system.Through my research, majority of the respondents presented their positive views. Obviously, letter grading system is useful than

numerical system. The students thought that laborious and less laborious students who appeared in the exam hall passed which reduces the risk of being fail in the exam. LGS provides the students some sorts of insight to reform their learning and get motivated towards learning process.

Some students also opinioned that LGS provides the students an ample opportunity to be participated in different learning process like project work class activities and extra activities so that it enhances students learning process. One of the students also thought that nobody fail in exam, thinking so some students do not care about their study. Sometimes it affects their learning.

Problems faced in letter grading system. Through the research, most of the students, guardians as well as some teachers were stills in confusion about this system due to the lack of knowledge, training, seminar. Therefore, the problem occurred while implementing LGS. The problem faced by students were listed below:

- Students could not understand GPA and its percentage and which GPA and its percentage and whose GPA allowed the students to join different sectors, field of study.
- Students were upgraded though they had scored very low grade in exam which kills students thinking capacity, creative skills and then they became dull in the learning process.

- Students are not motivated to learn but they think that they will not be fail in spite of getting lower grades in SEE and they thought be upgraded by their classroom presentation, performance, attendance rather than their subjective knowledge, writing skills in the exam and so on.

Support of letter grading evaluation system in learning after implementation. Nowadays letter grading evaluation system has been implemented to all the grades of school education. Through the questionnaire from the response of respondents they expressed their perception that LGS is really good in present context. They felt that LGS is beneficial to foster learning activities as if students had scored B⁺ in SEE exam, he/she is motivated to achieve A or A⁺ so this system has helped the students to develop their learning process. One of the respondents had opined that teacher were excited to implement the new concept and they are interested in making learning effectively and teacher even engage students in teaching which affects learning activities of the students. Some respondents viewed that LGS makes the students more competitive. Students get chance to choose subject of their own interest which helps them work hard on the interested fields. It provides positive influence to the learners to do their best. Whereas most of the respondents viewed that letter grading system

has discouraged the students in learning, as they feel tension free from being fail in exam.

Preference of letter grading evaluation system. Regarding the question most of the students liked letter grading evaluation system as in the following ways:

- a. There is not provision of pass and fail in the result published in SEE.T
- b. There is no discrimination between students due to the few marks gaps i.e. 81% and 89% which has motivated the weak and strong students in learning.
- c. Since there is no provision of failure in the exam which has increased the literacy rate of the nation.

Some students opined that, it is the crucial evaluation system which provides the students an opportunity to select the facility based on their ability, learning level and interest after SEE. Student can choose their field of study as per their GPA obtained in SEE examination. More ever few students pur their view against the questionnaires. They viewed that provision of making all the students pass and getting join in high level decreases the quality in education. And students have been careless in self-study. They are demotivated as they don't have fear, tension and anxiety of being failed in exam.

Chapter 5

Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter includes the major findings, conclusion and recommendations 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 3 schools including private and government of Dhanusha District in Janakpurdham.

Findings

This research attempts to find out the secondary level students' perception towards the letter grading system evaluation system in SEE. The main objectives of the research were “ To find out the secondary level students perception toward letter grading evaluation system in SEE and to explore the challenge of implementing letter grading system in SEE”. After the completion of the analysis and interpretation of data, mainly I found that most of the participants were in favor of necessity of the letter grading system in SEE but some were seemed to be less positive. They expressed their view and experience before and after appearing in SEE exam.

Furthermore, the major finding of the study were summarized on the basic of above mentioned objectives which are as follows:

1. Based on the research and data analysis, 56.67% (34) of the participants agreed that letter grading evaluation system should be adopted in SEE and 18.33%(11) of the participants agreed strongly and total agreed respondent were 75% (35). So it shows that most of the secondary level students have positive perception towards letter grading system in SEE. But 16.66%(11) of the respondents disagreed and 8.33%(5) of the students seemed to be neutral regarding this statement.
2. It was found that 75%(45) of the students agreed that letter grading system is appropriate for secondary level education, 16.66% (11) of the respondents disagreed the statements and 8.33%(5) of them were neutral in this regard and about 71.66%(43) of the students agreed that letter grading system is necessary in education domain. 20% (12) of them were neutral whereas 8.33% (5)of them were disagreed the statement. And they considered that letter grading evaluation system is the source of motivating the students towards learning.
3. Around 73.33%(44) of the student agreed that the letter grading system should be followed even in internal examination of school such as in unit test, class work, project work, extra-

curricular activities etc. And it was found that 55%(33) of the students agreed that stakeholders are still in confusion about letter grading system, its policy and provision. And 15%(9) students seemed to be neutral and 29.99%(18) of the students disagreed regarding the statements.

4. Approximately 66.66%(40) of the students agreed that teacher, students, parents and stakeholder should have knowledge of letter grading system but 21.66%(13) of them disagreed of this statement. Similarly 68.3% (41) of the students agreed that letter grading system is more effective and demanding system to enhance the quality of education. They viewed that letter grading system is an international practice and also necessary to be competitive with international level. But, 10% (6) respondents disagreed and 21.66% (13) were neutral.
5. It was found that 68.33%(41) of the learners agreed that letter grading reduces the stress and anxiety in the students regarding SEE. In opposition of this statements only 18.33%(11) of the students disagreed and 13.33%(8) of them remained neutral. Likewise 76.67%(46) of the students agreed that the letter grading system , motivates the students more in learning than numerical system but 15%(9) students disagreed and 8.33%(5) of these remained neutral concerning this statement.

6. In the same way, 50% (30) of the students agreed that letter grading system prepares the students for existing the 'real world'; in case of disagreed with this statement, 23.33%(14) of the students disagreed and 26.66%(16) of the students seemed to be neutral regarding statement. Similarly, it should that 73.33%(44) of the respondents agreed that letter grading system should adoption in SEE to evaluate students' actual ability. On the other hand 13.33%(8) of them disagreed and 13.33%(8) of them stayed neutral considering this statement.
7. Through the research, 50%(30) of the students agreed that letter grading system has some negative influences towards educational sectors, 38.33%(23) of the students disagreed the statement where only 11.66%(7) of the students remained neutral considering this statement. Similarly, 27.67%(16) of them disagreed that letter grading system decreases students' learning outcome. But 58.33%(35) of them agreed and 15%(9) were neutral regarding this statement but 26.66% (16) of the students disagreed the statement.

Conclusion

Letter grading system is worldwide practiced system for leveling the quality of students' academic performances. This system attempts to evaluate all rounded ability and capacity of the students and

converts the scores of the students into the continuum of grades either A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, E. The grade point average (GPA) is assigned the letter grade.

Letter grading evaluation system is new system in the educational context of Nepal. It is formulated and adopted to assess the actual learning achievement and ability of the students. It is necessary in present context Nepal because to should adopt this letter grading system. Most of the countries of this universe follow this letter grading system. This system encourages the students to do best based on their capacity and provides the students chances to get higher education according to their ability and level although they get lower grades. Reminding the demand of letter grading system in present context of Nepal, the government of Nepal and policy makers implemented this system. Letter grading system is implemented in school level education all over the country as a new system of evaluation.

Application of new system for evaluation is good but it should be effective and durable, the policy makers also should arrange and conduct the awareness programme to the teachers, students, parents and concerned people in order to make familiar about letter grading system. It seemed that the government lunched this system without well- preparation and appropriate motivation in students' evaluation

process. But, while implementing this system, not only students but all the teachers, stakeholders, and concerned people should be aware of its utility in contemporary context. If they become aware and continuously follow this system, it will really be fruitful in education sector. Through my research, secondary level students also perceived that letter grading evaluation system is the better system than numerical grading system. It is contextual as well and demanding system in education sector.

Recommendations

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

-) The policy makers, government of Nepal, DCE and MOE should make clear policy for letter grading evaluation system.
-) The policy makers should also arrange and conduct the awareness programme to the teachers, students, parents and concerned people in order to make familiar about letter grading system.
-) The government should provide training and seminars to the teachers to make clear about letter grading system.

-) The policy makers and concern authority should give focus both quality and quantity education for the development of the country.
-) Authority should motivate the students in learning and award them, who got good grade in exam.
-) They have to carry a lesson as learn the fishing skill first rather than having fish from others.

Practice related

-) School authority should make clear to the students, parents about lettergrading system.
-) The school administrator should organize different programs to clarify the students and parents about this system.
-) The teachers should be practical while evaluating students' assignment, test, and activities.
-) The teachers should aware the students towards quality education relating with grades.
-) The school administration should provide award those students who get good grade and 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 out further research in the representative area as:

-) This research can be beneficial who wants to carry out similar type research further.
-) This research only covers the secondary level students' perception towards letter grading system in SEE from Dhanusha district. It means this study is limited in its 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

Questionnaire

Dear Students

These questionnaires are the research tools for collecting information for my master level research entitled **Secondary Level Students' Perception Towards Letter Grading Evaluation System**. These questionnaires attempt to elicit your perceptions towards this letter grading system.

Please tick as applicable and put your response in brief where you are requested to write in your own words. All the information collected through the questionnaires will be kept confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the research. I will appreciate your honest opinions and assure you that your responses will be completely anonymous.

Please feel free while filling the questionnaires.

Thank you for your kind cooperation.

Researcher

Arbin Kumar Shahi

Tribhuvan University

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Name of the Student:

Name of the School:

Class :

Close-ended Questions

[Students are kindly requested to give the answers of the following questions according to their own perception]

1) We should adopt letter grading system in SEE in present context.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

2) Letter grading system is appropriate for your secondary education.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

3) Letter grading evaluation system is necessary in education domain.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

4) We should follow the letter grading evaluation system in our internal examination as well.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

5) We are still in confusion about new letter grading evaluation system, its policy and provision.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

6) The teachers, the students, the parents and even the stakeholders should have knowledge of letter grading evaluation system.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

7) Letter grading evaluation system is more effective and demanding system to enhance quality of education.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

8) The current letter grading evaluation system reduces the stress and anxiety in students regarding SEE examination.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

9) Motivation in letter grading evaluation system is greater than in numerical evaluation system.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

10) Letter grading evaluation system prepares us for existing the 'real world'.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly disagree

11) Letter grading system should be adopted in SEE to evaluate the students' actual ability.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral
Disagree Strongly disagree

12) Letter grading evaluation system has some negative influences towards educational sector.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral
Disagree Strongly disagree

13) Letter grading evaluation system decreases students' learning outcomes.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral
Disagree Strongly disagree

Open - ended Question

Give the answers of the following questions according to their own perception.

14) Is letter grading evaluation system necessary or not? Write your perception.

15) How does letter grading evaluation systems differ from numerical grading system?

16)Do you think letter grading evaluation system is more useful than numerical system?

17)What sorts of problems have you faced in letter grading evaluation system in SEE?

18)After implementation of letter grading evaluation system in Nepal, how does it help in your learning process?

19)Do you like letter grading evaluation system, Why?

Thank you for your kind cooperation.