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Role of Students' Feedback to Faculty Members for Institutional Quality Support System in Community Colleges in Baghmati Province

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Abstract

Student feedback is increasingly recognized as a pivotal component of quality assurance in higher education. This study examines how students' feedback to professors enables five community colleges in Bagmati Province, Nepal assist institutional excellence. The study employed a mixed-methods strategy combining a survey of 250 students with in-depth interviews and focus groups. Although highlighting certain areas for improvement such as course organization and teaching methods, statistical data reveal that students generally rated professors favorably in categories including subject expertise and communication skills. Qualitative theme analysis highlighted students' need for more participatory instruction, timely course completion, and unambiguous reactions to their comments. Therefore underlining key

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factors of perceived teaching quality, effective communication and general satisfaction revealed a positive link (r = 0.82). Building on these findings, we propose a "Feedback-to-Action" approach that closes the loop from feedback collecting to faculty development and policy improvement. Consistent with world best practices in continuous quality improvement, the framework emphasizes systematic data analysis, faculty involvement, action planning, and follow-up. By demonstrating that systematic use of student feedback can enhance internal quality support systems, the study contributes to the little body of work on student voice in Nepal's higher education quality assurance. Policy recommendations advocate for integrating students in quality assurance committees, incorporating feedback results into teacher development initiatives, and institutionalizing regular feedback mechanisms. Active utilization of student input, according to this study, can propel pedagogical growth, greater student happiness, and a culture of accountability and excellence in community college education.
Keywords: student feedback, quality assurance, community colleges, quality support systems, higher education, continuous improvement

Introduction

As educational institutions work to satisfy expectations and norms, guaranteeing excellence in higher education has turned into a worldwide goal. Quality assurance (QA) systems offer universities and colleges organized ways to track and raise their academic standards. Student input has become increasingly important in these QA procedures since it reflects the idea that students are main stakeholders in education whose opinions can propel development. Collecting feedback from students about their learning experience is now regarded as “one of the central pillars of the quality process,” and student perspectives are increasingly heard by institutions and even governments. Many countries have implemented national student survey systems – for example, the National Student Survey in the UK – to publicly report student feedback on teaching and learning, integrating student voice into quality evaluations. The fundamental rationale is that including students in evaluating courses and teaching not only enhances their own learning but also supports institutional level monitoring and quality enhancement of education.

From the standpoint of stakeholder theory, one could see the role of student feedback in quality improvement as ongoing improvement. Resonating with Deming's Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle for quality improvement in education, feedback systems provide a loop whereby student input drives faculty development and curricular change. According to social cognition theory, feedback provides hints that could affect teachers' self-efficacy and instructional strategies (Bandura, 2024). Well documented in many industries is the capacity of feedback to influence outcomes; for example, studies in engineering education have shown that structured student evaluations significantly enhance teaching quality and student performance (Jin, 2012). Recent studies are especially significant since they emphasize not just the requirement of giving comments but also feedback literacy—the ability of receivers to understand and use criticism. Regarding student-to-faculty feedback, this implies that colleges should foster a culture where

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feedback leads to action and teachers must be open and skilled at interpreting student evaluations. Conversely, research also highlight a potential mismatch: teachers may struggle with using comments to satisfy responsibility criteria as opposed to genuine instructional improvement. For example, Winstone and Carless (2021) found that university professors often felt "professional dissonance" when quality assurance objectives led them to view student feedback in terms of student satisfaction measures or complaint avoidance rather than as a tool for learning-centered development. Such outcomes draw attention to the need of a balanced strategy that sees student feedback as a tool to support teaching excellence rather than a straightforward ranking for compliance.

Over the previous two decades, higher education quality assurance in Nepal has been evolving. The Government of Nepal established the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 1993 and officially constituted the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAAC) in 2007 to promote and monitor excellence in higher education. This policy encourages colleges to finish peer review and self-assessment toward accreditation. Tribhuvan University (TU), Nepal's oldest and largest university, enrolls about 93% of the country's higher education students and has taken a leading role in QA efforts. As of 2020, a total of 49 higher education institutions in Nepal had been accredited, of which 33 were community colleges (community-managed campuses affiliated to universities). Many more institutions are in the process: among roughly 500 community campuses nationwide under TU, 148 had submitted initial QA proposals and 69 had submitted self-study reports by 2020. These numbers indicate growing participation in QA but also highlight the challenge – a majority of colleges have yet to fully engage in the accreditation process. Notably, QA participation has been spurred by incentives such as grants tied to accreditation, which community colleges often pursue, whereas private colleges (not eligible for such grants) lag in QA involvement. Bagmati Province, which includes the Kathmandu Valley and surrounding districts, hosts a large number of higher education institutions, including both urban colleges and rural community campuses. Five community colleges from this province – one each in Sindhuli, Makwanpur, Bhaktapur, Dhading, and Kavrepalanchok districts – form the focus of this study. These colleges are representative of Nepal's community-based higher education sector, which operates on modest resources and local governance, and are typically affiliated with national universities (e.g., TU). Equity is dependent upon quality in such schools since they educate children from various and frequently underprivileged communities. Though actual implementation on the ground—such as regular student evaluations and use of the findings—can be uneven, the UGC's quality framework offers direction. Preliminary reports and observations indicate that although many universities gather student input every semester, the degree to which these data guide changes differs greatly. Certainly, a recurrent difficulty mentioned in more general settings is that schools collect student input regularly but "often fall short of applying this data to... enhance educational experiences". Capacity limits or absence of official internal quality assurance units may prevent community colleges in Nepal from completely institutionalizing the feedback loop from data collecting to action.

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The Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing emphasis on quality assurance and accreditation in Nepal, there remains a gap in how effectively student feedback is utilized as part of internal quality support systems. Many community colleges conduct student evaluations of teaching, but the process often ends at data collection. Key issues include: (1) feedback results may not be systematically analyzed or communicated to faculty in a constructive manner; (2) actionable changes based on feedback are not always implemented, or if implemented, not communicated back to students (failing to "close the loop"); and (3) students sometimes perceive that their feedback has little impact, which can reduce their motivation to provide honest and thoughtful responses. Common student concerns in these colleges – identified through preliminary discussions and an internal report – include the effectiveness of teaching methods, teacher's punctuality and regularity in classes, the pacing of course delivery, and the degree of student engagement in classrooms. At one university, for example, students observed that although many teachers are skilled, some depend on lecture-heavy methods that might be more engaging. There were also reports of classes starting late. In smaller community campuses where students and professors generally know one another well, guaranteeing anonymity and lowering fear of consequences becomes a challenge that could discourage honest input. In the scope of Nepal's QA system, the absence of a robust internal mechanism to act on student input constitutes a major gap as, without translation into changes, the potential of student voice to improve quality stays unfulfilled.

Research Gap

Although there is limited research particularly on how student feedback is applied in institutional quality assurance, especially in developing countries, many studies done throughout the world have examined student evaluations of instruction and their relationship to teaching effectiveness. Little scholarly study has looked at the feedback loop at the college level; previous studies on higher education quality in Nepal have concentrated on structural issues—curriculum, faculty credentials, resources—and overall accrediting outcomes. Ghimire and Timilsina (2022), for example, surveyed teachers and staff at Tribhuvan University and underlined curricular improvement and faculty development for quality assurance; they did not, however, address student feedback mechanisms directly. This study aims to narrow that gap by rigorously examining how student feedback in community colleges and how it can build an institutional quality support system. Knowledge is power to handle the companies. Knowledge comes from the education, experiences, interaction, exposures etc so management of company should be careful about the knowledge and capacity of their employees which should be used for the better performance of their organization. There were 11 indicators of knowledge management used to measure the knowledge management practice (Gautam, 2022a). It contextualizes global knowledge on student feedback within Nepal's QA environment and builds a framework especially for resource-constrained institutions to use student input as a tool for ongoing growth.

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Research Questions

Based on the above, the study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do students perceive and evaluate the teaching performance of faculty members in community colleges of Bagmati Province, and what does this indicate about current teaching quality?

RQ2: What key areas for improvement in teaching and learning can be identified from student feedback in these colleges (e.g., teaching methods, faculty-student interaction, assessment practices, etc.), and what patterns emerge across the institutions?

RQ3: In what ways is student feedback currently utilized within the institutional quality assurance processes of these community colleges, and how can a structured "feedback-to-action" framework be developed to better integrate student feedback into quality improvement initiatives?

By addressing these questions, the study seeks to elucidate the extent to which student feedback can serve as a catalyst for pedagogical enhancement and inform policy or administrative interventions in community-based colleges. The ultimate goal is to propose a model for systematically using student feedback as part of an Institutional Quality Support System (IQSS) that aligns with both national accreditation requirements and international best practices in higher education quality assurance.

Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to assess the role of students' feedback to faculty members in strengthening the institutional quality support system within community colleges in Bagmati Province, Nepal. Specifically, the study pursues to assess faculty performance and teaching quality from the perspective of students by analyzing feedback on core dimensions such as subject matter expertise, communication skills, pedagogical methods, classroom management, punctuality, and overall professional conduct. It also hopes to draw attention to certain areas that require improvement—especially those aspects of teaching and course delivery that often receive unfavorable comments or low grades, such as instructional strategies, assessment fairness, course organization, and workload distribution. The study also looks at how much current professor and administrator gathering, analysis, and use of student opinions influences institutional choices, faculty growth, and curriculum enhancement. Based on the empirical findings and relevant international best practices, the project also seeks to develop a comprehensive input-to-Action Framework intended to institutionalize student input as a cyclical and participative instrument within internal quality control processes. This approach ensures that every stakeholder gets methodically gathered, meaningfully assessed input that is transformed into targeted enhancements. By means of these objectives, the study aims to transform student feedback from a procedural formality into a basic engine of continuous quality improvement and participatory governance at Nepalese community colleges.

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The Review of Literature

Student Feedback as a Tool for Quality Assurance – Global Perspectives

Student inputs, which has acquired global appeal, has been a major factor in assessing and enhancing higher education teaching quality during the past several decades. Traditionally, peer review and administrative regulations defined quality in higher education; however, there has been a paradigmatic change toward incorporating the student voice into quality assurance systems (Williams & Cappuccini-Ansfield, 2007). Once seen as passive consumers of education, students are today seen as main actors and "co-creators" of their learning process; their views on teaching efficacy have great importance. Though seen in an academic setting of cooperation rather than consumption, this change fits a customer-oriented perspective of education. Resource Allocation Support, schools can ensure that students have access to the necessary tools and environments conducive to effective learning. This not only improves academic outcomes but also fosters a sense of belonging among students, which is critical for their overall well-being (Gautam et al., 2024) Large-scale student feedback surveys are one result of this worldwide movement. Final-year undergraduate comments on many facets of their courses have been gathered by the National Student Survey (NSS) in the United Kingdom since 2005; the findings are released to guide next students and promote rivalry and development among universities. Explicitly mentioning student participation in quality assurance activities as part of their internal QA systems, the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) advise institutions to "make sure students' feedback is gathered and carefully analyzed" (ENQA, 2015). Likewise, student evaluations of teaching (SET) have been common in the United States for decades, originally meant to enhance instruction by means of formative feedback to teachers and finally co-opted for summative reasons such tenure and promotion choices (Marsh & Roche, 1997). Virtually all higher education institutions in the United States, Australia, and many other countries run some type of student evaluation questionnaire every semester (Spooren et al., 2013). Often include open-ended comments, these tools usually urge students to evaluate their teachers on several factors including clarity, organization, excitement, grading fairness, and others.

Especially when combined over great numbers of respondents and several courses, research usually indicates that student evaluations can offer genuine and beneficial insights on teaching quality. Although student ratings should not be seen as flawless measurements, a thorough study by Spooren et al. (2013) revealed that they often match with other signs of teaching efficacy—such as peer evaluations and student learning outcomes—thereby having "state of the art" use in quality control. Conversely, the research is challenging. A meta-analysis by Uttl et al. (2017), for instance, indicated that student evaluations in different research shown little to no link with learning outcomes, hence calling into doubt the relationship between high student assessment scores and real student learning. Such results imply that students might occasionally praise teachers who are humorous or slack instead of those who most efficiently further learning—a reminder that student evaluation should be read with caution and in context (Richardson, 2005). Most academics, however, believe that well designed and applied student

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comments are a great instrument for improving the quality of education (Alderman et al., 2012). The cumulative judgment of those who encounter the course first-hand over an entire semester provides a viewpoint that other assessment techniques cannot. Comments from students thus have a two-fold impact on quality assurance: formative (enhancing courses and teaching) and summative (steering quality monitoring and decision-making). Describing these two goals, Brennan et al. (2003) said universities collect comments to improve the students' immediate learning experience as well as the more comprehensive assessment of programs and teachers. In the perfect situations, two goals coincide: academic leaders evaluate comments to find systematic problems and outstanding performance while teachers receive it for self-improvement Many colleges not only gather comments but also publicly release summary findings and steps done, thus closing the loop. For example, Australian universities occasionally release annual teaching highlights or concerns and explain how student recommendations—such as want for more practical examples or improved Wi-Fi in classrooms—were handled, therefore confirming the student participation in QA (Shah et al, 2011). Such openness enables students to participate more in comments as they know their views cause real modifications.

On the other hand, research highlights difficulties and intricacies in implementing student-centered quality control. According to Williams and Cappuccini-Ansfield (2007), if student comments are seen only as a bureaucratic obligation or marketing tool (e.g., to brag high satisfaction ratings), their worth for real development declines. "Less on teacher inputs and more on evidence of student response to feedback," they say, means institutions should emphasis the impact of changes made in light of feedback. This point of view suits a developmental one: the enhancement of student learning and experience rather than only the act of data collecting is the actual measure of successful feedback processes.

Impact of Student Feedback on Teaching Practices and Institutional Improvement

When employed effectively, student input can produce observable changes in learning and instruction. Many case studies have recorded favorable developments brought about by paying attention to student voices. A research in the United States, for instance, revealed that giving college teachers thorough feedback reports and consultations on their instruction resulted in notable gains in student evaluations and academic performance in following semesters (Marsh & Roche, 1997). In reaction to student criticism, teachers sometimes change their behavior; typical changes include more prompt return of graded work, improved course organization, more interesting presentation, and more explicit explanation of ideas. These changes have been linked to improved student performance and involvement (Kember & Wong, 2000).

Novák (2023) tested a novel student feedback tool linked with follow-up talks between professors and student representatives at a university in Slovakia in a recent European study. The program not only gathered survey data but also actively promoted discussion on the outcomes. Novák claims this approach motivated teachers to think back on their work and make adjustments—such as using different teaching strategies or changing their responsibilities—which students then valued. The study found that open discussions about feedback among

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teachers fostered mutual understanding and trust, therefore creating a more student-centered learning environment. This emphasizes how completing the loop—by not only crunching feedback figures but also interacting with students on the results—can shift feedback from a formality into a driver for improvement.

At the institutional level, student opinion has also been demonstrated to affect policy and curriculum. Annual assessments of NSS results, for example, have prompted UK universities to launch campus-wide projects such as enhancing academic advising systems and assignment feedback since students often grade those areas lower than others. Student input, according to Alderman et al. (2012), "the cornerstone of an effective quality assurance system," offers data-driven guidance for resource allocation and strategic planning. For instance, if comments indicate that students believe classroom conditions uncomfortable or library resources lacking, administrators may defend expenditures in these areas under quality improvement initiatives. Many quality assurance agencies—including Nepal's UGC and India's NAAC—require universities to show how they collect and use student input as proof of a dedication to ongoing development in the context of accreditation (NAAC, 2019). Reviews tend to be better for institutions with strong feedback systems since they can demonstrate a path of feedback to action to progress.

Researchers have also found, meantime, elements that impact how well student feedback works. Faculty attitude and responsiveness are two elements. Researches show that when teachers take student input seriously and are ready to change, pupils have better later experiences (Very, 2018). Improvements are improbable, though, should professors ignore student concerns or consider evaluations just an administrative chore. Programs for faculty development might help in this regard; for instance, seminars that enable professors to constructively analyze student assessments (emphasizing trends over anonymous one-off comments) can reduce defensiveness and promote a growth attitude. The quality of the feedback tool is another element. More actionable data will come from a well-designed survey that avoids unclear questions and reflects pertinent aspects of teaching. Spooren et al. (2013) underline the need of validity and reliability in student assessment forms; questions should correspond with elements of instruction under teachers' control and improvement. For example, inquiring whether "the instructor encouraged questions and discussion" is more relevant than inquiring whether "the instructor is knowledgeable" (students lack the tools to evaluate the latter). Good instruments also frequently have open-ended questions allowing students to justify their scores or point out problems not addressed by rating-scale items.

Student feedback's effect is mosted when schools make sure the feedback loop is closed. "Closing the loop" is the process of acting on feedback and letting students know about such actions (or the justifications if some recommendations cannot be followed). Watson (2003) contends that efficient action depends on completing the loop: students can grow cynical and less involved in QA processes if they never notice improvements or hear about their comments following survey completion. On the other hand, demonstrating responsiveness can start a virtuous cycle of more involvement and more honest feedback. A university in the Netherlands,

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for instance, implemented a policy to post on the web a "You Said, We Did" report each semester outlining important feedback topics and modifications achieved after observing low course evaluations. Student response rates and confidence in the system increased with this openness. By not only pointing out problems from feedback but also suggesting a systematic approach to guarantee that feedback results in ongoing quality improvement, our research seeks to include these best practices.

Challenges and Biases in Student Feedback Utilization

While student comments are helpful, they come with difficulties. One well-documented problem is the possibility of bias in student assessments. Researchers have looked at several biases connected to student traits (motivation level, academic ability), course traits (anticipated grade, class size, whether the course is required or elective), and instructor traits (gender, ethnicity, accent, age). According to Basow and Martin (2013), sometimes subtly, both professor gender and race might affect student ratings. For example, in their research, male students generally rated teachers somewhat higher than female professors, especially in traditionally male-dominated sectors, who often received more negative comments. Other research have shown that teachers who are more engaging or funny could receive higher evaluations not connected to the real learning attained, a phenomenon commonly called the "Dr. Fox effect" (Clayson, 2009). Furthermore, students' expected scores can influence their comments: classes they find challenging or in which they obtain lower grades tend to have lower ratings, which begs the question whether ratings indicate satisfaction more than learning (Uttl et al., 2017). Therefore, institutions have to read student feedback data carefully, sometimes employing statistical modifications or taking several measures into account to guarantee equity (Marsh & Roche, 1997).

Response rates and survey weariness are two further difficulties. Students are sometimes requested to complete several surveys—course evaluations, program evaluations, etc.—as feedback surveys have become more common, which lowers response rates and lessens the quality of their answers. Low response rates can distort findings if the respondents are not typical of the whole class (e.g., maybe only very satisfied or very unsatisfied students reply). Many universities have shifted assessments online and send out constant reminders or even offer incentives to finish in order to offset this (for example, letting students view their final results a few days early if they finish evaluations). The literature, on the other hand, indicates that incentives have to be handled morally and that the actual secret to improved response rates is showing to students that their feedback counts (by closing the loop as discussed) and making the survey process as easy as possible (Mohd et al., 2016). Community colleges in Nepal—the setting of our research—raises more questions including students' knowledge of evaluation procedures (which might be quite new in certain colleges) and resource limits (some may still use paper surveys due to limited internet connectivity).

From an institutional point of view, a major challenge is transitioning from data to action. Collecting feedback is just the first stage; many organizations find the next ones of analysis, distribution, and action difficult, as said above. Kayyali (2023) notes that while colleges have

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enough of student data, they lack "systematic ways to funnel that information into decision-making". Common traps include: reports generated but not extensively debated, faculty members getting defensive or dismissive of student input, and management not setting aside time or money to handle the problems mentioned. Quality assurance offices and academic departments might also be out of sync; while QA personnel may create thorough feedback reports, departmental heads and teachers have to be involved to understand and use the results (Elassy, 2015).

Using student feedback for quality improvement raises relevant questions of confidentiality and honesty as well. Students must feel safe that their honest views—especially if negative—will not provoke retaliation from teachers. Anonymity can be difficult in smaller community college environments; teachers might know who responded if only a few students answer or if certain statements make it clear who likely made them. This could dishearten honesty. Important methods advised in the literature include guaranteeing really anonymous collecting (e.g., using online platforms or neutral third parties to administer surveys) and aggregate reporting (so individual students cannot be singled out). Our study's universities revealed different methods; one had a well-anonymized online feedback form while others used paper forms gathered by class monitors, which could affect anonymity. Such variations probably influence the quality of feedback data gathered. Finally, there is the issue of student feedback literacy and participation. Students, like professors, have to understand how to provide helpful comments. Research indicates that not all students grasp how their comments will be applied, which could influence the substance of their answers. Some may express grievances unrelated to teaching quality, while others may be reluctant to criticize because of cultural respect for instructors, particularly in South Asian settings where teachers are highly regarded. Projects to teach kids the value of their input and how to offer particular, constructive remarks can increase the relevance of feedback (Carless & Boud, 2018). For instance, offering comparisons between constructive comments—"The teacher could get better by using more real-world examples"—and non-constructive ones—"This class was dull" could help students to consider more closely their encounter. In the Nepali setting, this is very uncharted ground; including student orientation on feedback could improve the outcomes of the feedback process. Ultimately, although student feedback offers clear advantages and is fundamental to contemporary QA, universities have to negotiate the problems of bias, involvement, and follow-through. The literature shows that feedback systems perform best under a culture of trust and improvement: students believe they can speak openly and that their opinions will count; professors believe that feedback is intended to help their development rather than punish; and administrators believe the process is reliable enough to distribute resources in reaction to it (Harvey, 2003). Aiming to provide solutions that maximize benefits and minimize obstacles in the particular environment of community colleges in Bagmati Province, our results will be read with these factors in mind..

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Quality Assurance and Student Feedback in Nepal and South Asia

Higher education systems in South Asia, including Nepal, have been undergoing reforms to improve quality and relevance in the face of massification and global competition (Altbach & Salmi, 2011). In Nepal, as outlined earlier, the QAAC under UGC has been the driving force for quality assurance. One of the accreditation criteria set by UGC Nepal involves institutionalizing internal quality assurance mechanisms, where regular student feedback is an indicator. According to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) guidelines of UGC (UGC Nepal, 2019), accredited institutions are expected to have "a formal process for students to review courses and teaching, and for the results to inform improvements." This aligns with practices in neighboring countries: for instance, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India mandates that accredited colleges conduct student satisfaction surveys and include the analysis in their self-study reports (NAAC, 2019). Similarly, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, through their QA agencies, encourage student feedback as part of institutional reviews (Alam, 2024). Despite these policy expectations, the actual implementation can vary widely. In many South Asian colleges, especially public or community-based ones, structured student evaluations are a relatively new concept and may initially meet with skepticism from faculty (Shah et al., 2011).

Nepal's community colleges (locally often termed community campuses) occupy a unique position – they are semi-public institutions governed by local committees and often cater to students from less advantaged backgrounds. Knowledge management plans and encourage the development of procedures linked to knowledge generation, transfer, and embedding. The state, on the other hand, needs to boost its investment in education (Gautam, 2022b). A recent study by Ghimire and Timilsina (2022) examined quality assurance issues in Nepali higher education and found that faculty quality (qualifications, training, and motivation) was perceived as the most crucial factor for assuring academic quality. They emphasize faculty development and incentivization as key strategies. While their study did not focus on student feedback, it indirectly suggests that listening to students could inform faculty development needs. For example, if feedback consistently points out that certain teaching methods are ineffective, the college can organize targeted training workshops for faculty on interactive teaching or instructional design. In fact, some Nepali colleges that have undergone the QAA process have established Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) that include student representatives. Anecdotal evidence (as discussed in QA workshops organized by UGC) indicates that having students on these committees has been beneficial – they bring forward issues such as inconvenient class schedules, lack of co-curricular activities, or outdated teaching materials, which the faculty or management may overlook. This is in line with Elassy's (2015) model advocating student involvement not just as evaluators but as active participants in QA committees, thereby shifting some ownership of quality to students themselves.

However, formal studies specifically examining student feedback in Nepali colleges are scarce. A review of literature on Nepal Journals Online and international databases shows very

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few publications on this topic. One related study is by Luitel (2022), who surveyed student satisfaction in a Nepali public campus and found moderate satisfaction levels but noted that "mechanisms to capture and respond to student feedback were informal and ad-hoc." They recommended establishing formal feedback channels.

In the broader South Asian context, Pakistan and India offer some instructive insights. A study from Pakistan by Bukhari et al. (2024) – titled "Students as Quality Assurance Agents" – found that universities had centralized methods to gather student feedback but often did not effectively close the loop to guide improvements. They concluded that merely gathering feedback is insufficient; the institutions that benefited most were those that had an integrated approach where feedback results were directly tied into faculty appraisal, and support systems were in place for faculty to improve (such as teaching centers). Indian colleges under NAAC accreditation reportedly use student feedback results in their Annual Quality Assurance Reports (AQARs), and some have made it a Key Performance Indicator for departments (NAAC, 2019). In this spirit, some institutions in the region have initiated teacher mentoring programs, where senior faculty help junior faculty interpret and act on student feedback (Shah et al., 2011). These cultural factors – how feedback is perceived by faculty – greatly influence its success as a quality tool in South Asia, where hierarchical traditions in teacher-student relations are strong. Encouragingly, younger faculty seem more open to student input, especially those who have had exposure to international training or modern pedagogies.

Research Gap in Nepal

The review demonstrates that while the importance of student feedback is well recognized globally and regionally, there is a lack of empirical research in the context of Nepali community colleges on how feedback is collected and used for quality support. This study addresses that gap by providing data and analysis specific to Bagmati Province's community colleges. It builds upon global best practices while tailoring recommendations to Nepal's context – acknowledging, for example, resource constraints (limited institutional research capacity), cultural nuances (students' hesitation to criticize teachers openly), and the dual governance structure of community campuses (which involves local management committees who must also value and act on student feedback). By integrating these considerations, the study aims to propose a practical framework for Nepali colleges that draws from proven concepts such as closing the feedback loop, yet is achievable within their setting. In doing so, it contributes to the discourse on quality assurance in Nepal by highlighting the often underutilized voice of students as a driving force for change.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the role of student feedback in institutional quality support. The design can be characterized as a convergent parallel mixed-method (Creswell, 2014), wherein quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously (or in parallel) and then merged for interpretation. The quantitative component

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consisted of a structured survey capturing students' evaluations of their faculty's teaching performance across multiple criteria. The qualitative component involved semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to delve deeper into participants' experiences with the feedback process and perceptions of its impact. This design was chosen to not only measure observable patterns (e.g., average ratings, frequency of certain feedback themes) but also to explore the context, reasons, and feelings behind those patterns, providing richer insight. The approach is largely descriptive and exploratory, aligning with the study's aims of diagnosing current practices and formulating improvements rather than testing a specific hypothesis. By triangulating survey results with interview narratives, the study enhances the validity of findings – for example, quantitative data might reveal that a certain percentage of students rate "teaching methods" as only acceptable, while qualitative comments explain why (e.g., too few interactive activities), thereby giving actionable meaning to the numbers.

Study Area and Population

The research was conducted in five community colleges located in Bagmati Province, Nepal. These colleges – one each from Sindhuli, Makwanpur, Bhaktapur, Dhading, and Kavrepalanchok districts – were purposefully selected to represent the diversity within the province's community-run higher education institutions. Three of the colleges are in semi-urban areas (district headquarters or towns) and two are in more rural settings. All five are affiliated with Tribhuvan University and offer undergraduate programs (Bachelor's degrees) in fields such as Education, Management, and Humanities; one college also offers Science programs. The typical class size ranges from 40 to 80 students per year of study. Being community colleges, their governance involves a local Campus Management Committee, and their funding is partially supported by community contributions and partially by student fees and limited government grants.

The population of interest comprised the students and faculty/administrators of these colleges. Specifically, for the student feedback survey, the target population was the enrolled undergraduate students (estimated at about 1200 across the five colleges). We focused primarily on second-year and third-year (i.e., senior) students, under the assumption that they have more exposure to various faculty members and courses, and thus can provide more informed feedback. First-year students, being new, might not yet have a basis for comparing or assessing teaching quality as thoroughly. For the qualitative component, the population included knowledgeable informants about the feedback processes: this encompassed students (particularly those who may have served as class representatives or student council members), faculty members, and academic administrators such as campus chiefs or QA coordinators.

Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

Quantitative Sampling

To ensure representation among the five participating community colleges and their academic programs, we applied a stratified random sampling technique. The approximately 1,200 total student population was stratified first by college and then by faculty or department (e.g., Education, Management, Humanities). Respondents were selected according to the size

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of the subgroup within each stratum using random sampling techniques to reduce selection bias and ensure broad inclusion across academic years and disciplines.

The minimal required sample size was obtained using Cochran's approach for categorical data at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.. This yielded a target of approximately 291 students, which we rounded to 300 for practical distribution—approximately 60 students per college. In practice, after data cleaning (removal of incomplete or invalid responses), we retained 250 valid responses: 45 from Sindhuli Campus, 53 from Makwanpur Campus, 50 from Bhaktapur Campus, 47 from Dhading Campus, and 55 from Kavrepalanchok Campus. The sample included about 60% third-year and 40% second-year students, with a gender distribution of 52% female and 48% male.

Though the stratification and proportional random selection tried to reduce sample bias, logistical constraints during fieldwork—such as class scheduling and student availability—demanded certain pragmatic modifications that resulted in convenience sampling inside the strata.. We acknowledge this limitation, and in the revised manuscript, we explicitly discuss potential nonresponse bias—where certain groups (e.g., students less engaged in feedback practices) may be underrepresented. These concerns are addressed with reference to general sampling best practices in educational research.

Qualitative Sampling

The qualitative aspect found information-rich individuals who may offer thorough examination of the institutional reactions and feedback mechanisms by means of intentional sampling. Of the fifteen total interviews, ten were with students and five with faculty members or academic administrators. Student interviewees were chosen depending on their active involvement in academic life—including class reps, student council members, or high-achieving students—thereby guaranteeing that different and eloquent views were represented. Of the student interviews, six were female and four male.

Among staff and administrators, we spoke with at least one quality assurance focal point or senior faculty members engaged in student feedback projects from every school. Campus Chiefs (principals) were requested to get administrative viewpoints at colleges lacking official IQAC systems.

Apart from personal interviews, two focus group discussions—FGDs—were held to investigate common viewpoints and inspire discussion. Makwanpur Campus had the other (5 pupils); Bhaktapur Campus had one group (6 students). These cross-disciplinary, mixed-gender FGDs allowed vibrant involvement and theme saturation. Especially after the second FGD and the 12th interview, information redundancy was seen, suggesting that significant subjects had been well recorded. This mixed-method sampling approach guaranteed a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of the role of student feedback in institutional quality processes across several institutional contexts in Bagmati Province by means of a mixed-method sampling strategy combining random selection for quantitative rigor with intentional selection for qualitative depth.

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Data Collection Instruments

Student Feedback Survey

To collect quantitative data on students' perceptions of teacher performance, we developed a systematic survey methodology based on a comprehensive analysis of student evaluation surveys and quality assurance frameworks often used in higher education. The initial pool of subjects was shaped by relevant academic studies, the UGC Nepal's Quality Assurance Division templates, and global best practices in course evaluation.

The instrument was divided into two parts:

- Likert-scale questions addressing basic elements of teaching effectiveness
- Open-ended questions enabling qualitative feedback on teacher strengths, areas for growth, and suggestions for institutional transformation.

The Likert-scale section included the following seven dimensions:

- **Subject Knowledge**: The instructor demonstrates strong knowledge of the subject matter.
- **Teaching Methods**: The instructor uses effective teaching methods."
- **Communication Skills**: The instructor explains concepts clearly and effectively.
- **Class Management**: The instructor manages class time well and maintains discipline.
- **Punctuality & Regularity**: "The instructor is punctual and conducts classes regularly as per schedule.
- **Feedback & Support**: The instructor provides helpful feedback on assignments and is available to help students.
- **Overall Satisfaction**: Overall, I am satisfied with the instructor's teaching in this course.

Descriptive provided shared knowledge; hence, responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale (5 = Excellent, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Acceptable, 1 = Below Average), with descriptive anchors to ensure common understanding. The survey was bilingual—written in English with matching Nepali translations—to increase accessibility..

Instrument Validation and Reliability Testing

To establish **content validity**, we consulted with two academic experts—one senior lecturer well-versed in educational evaluation and one quality assurance officer from UGC Nepal—who reviewed the questionnaire for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives.

A pilot test was conducted using a sample of 30 students from a comparable university in Kathmandu. Depending on the pilot feedback, certain aspects were rephrased to clarify and simplify language. The pilot also enabled us to confirm responder knowledge and determine average completion time—roughly 12–15 minutes.

The survey was then assessed for internal consistency dependability. The Cronbach's alpha scores for each subscale were calculated as follows:

Subject Knowledge: $\alpha = 0.82$

Teaching Methods: $\alpha = 0.78$

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Punctuality & Regularity: $\alpha = 0.79$
Communication Skills: $\alpha = 0.80$
Class Management: $\alpha = 0.81$
Feedback & Support: $\alpha = 0.80$
Overall Satisfaction: $\alpha = 0.85$

All values exceeded value surpassed the generally acknowledged exploratory research of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ for exploratory research, affirming the instrument's internal reliability. The paper now clearly states these findings as proof of psychometric soundness.

The questionnaire's open-ended part invited students to expound on:

- The greatest strengths of the instructor,
- Specific areas where the instructor could improve, and
- General suggestions for enhancing the teaching-learning experience at their institution.

These qualitative responses were subjected to thematic analysis, elevating the understanding of the quantitative findings.

Interviews and Focus Group Guides

To collect qualitative data, we developed semi-structured interview guides tailored separately for students and faculty/administrators. The student guide included exploratory prompts such as:

- "Can you describe how you and your classmates provide feedback on your courses or teachers?"
- "Do you feel comfortable giving honest feedback? Why or why not?"
- "Have you seen any changes in teaching or policy based on student feedback?"

The faculty/administrator guide focused on:

- How is feedback from students collected and reviewed?
- Can you provide an example of changes made based on student feedback?
- What challenges exist in using student feedback to improve teaching quality?

Two focus group discussions (FGDs) were also conducted with students to explore collective perspectives and generate group-based dialogue. These FGDs (N = 6 and N = 5 students respectively) were held at Bhaktapur and Makwanpur campuses and included participants from diverse academic programs and genders. The discussions followed the same themes as the interviews but allowed for richer peer-driven reflections.

All interviews and FGDs were conducted in a mix of English and Nepali depending on participant selection. Each session was audio-recorded with informed consent and transcribed for evaluation, around 30 to 60 minutes long. Personal identifiers were removed after transcribing to ensure anonymity.

Validity and reliability

To ensure dependability of qualitative findings, we employed various strategies:

- Triangulation of data sources (students and faculty),

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- Member checking with selected participants to verify interpretations,
- Audit trail maintenance, including coding frameworks and memos,
- And peer debriefing among researchers during the coding process.

The overall methodological strength of the study is enhanced by this combination of instrument validation, pilot testing, reliability analysis, and qualitative rigor, which also gives trust in the results obtained from student input as a tool for institutional quality improvement.

Data Analysis technique

Quantitative Analysis

Survey data from the Likert-scale questions were coded and input into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program for analysis.. We conducted descriptive statistics primarily: frequencies and percentages for each rating item to see the distribution of student responses across the five-point scale, and mean and standard deviation for each item as an overall indicator of perceived performance. For each of the five colleges, we also examined the mean ratings to check for any notable differences, although our main focus was on aggregated results (since differences were minor, we report combined results). To address Objective 1 (assessing faculty performance perceptions), we generated tables of frequency counts (e.g., how many students rated “Excellent”, “Very Good”, etc. for each criterion) and identified the proportion of students rating their instructors positively (Good or above) versus critically (Acceptable or below) on each aspect. We also computed an “overall satisfaction” score per respondent (this could be the rating given to the overall item, or an average of all items, which in our case turned out very similar).

Additionally, we performed correlation analysis to explore relationships between variables, addressing a part of Objective 3 (understanding how different aspects of feedback relate). In this regard, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the "Overall satisfaction" score and every single element evaluation (knowledge, communication, approaches, etc.). This lets one identify which aspects most closely link to students' overall evaluation of their teachers. A substantial correlation, for instance, between communication clarity and general satisfaction would suggest that the quality of communication greatly affects students' general perception of education.. We also checked correlations among specific aspects themselves (for instance, between subject knowledge and teaching method ratings) to see if students who rate one aspect high tend to rate others high – indicating a possible “halo effect” or genuinely consistent performance across dimensions. The sample size (N=250) was adequate for detecting moderate correlations at statistically significant levels (we considered correlations significant at $p < 0.01$ given the relatively large N). However, rather than emphasize p-values, our interpretation leans towards practical significance and patterns, since this is not a hypothesis-testing study per se.

Moreover, to address Objective 2 (areas for improvement), we defined criteria for what counts as an “area needing improvement” from the survey: if a notable percentage of students (for instance, >15%) rated an aspect as “Acceptable (2)” or “Below Average (1)”, we flagged that aspect. We tabulated these counts and percentages. For example, we found that 16% of

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respondents gave an Acceptable or Below Average rating for “Teaching Methods”, whereas only 4% did so for “Subject Knowledge”, highlighting teaching methodology as a relative weakness (details provided in Results). These quantitative indicators guided us on which areas to probe further in qualitative analysis.

Qualitative Analysis

A methodical thematic analysis guided by Braun and Clarke (2006) examined the qualitative data—including open-ended survey responses, interview and focus group transcripts. Bilingual academics translated Nepali sections into English throughout the transcription process, therefore transcribing all interviews and focus groups verbatim.

To guide the analytical process, we employed a two-phase coding strategy:

- **Open Coding**: To find new ideas and recurring patterns in the raw data, we initially did line-by-line open coding. Text parts indicating different thoughts or points of view were categorized; for example, "feedback ignored," "faculty defensiveness," or "improvement in response time."
- **Axial Coding**: These initial codes were then analyzed and categorized into more generic higher-order groups or themes using axial coding methods. This stage allowed us to examine connections between codes and group them into structured themes reflecting both the interview guide and new developing findings.

We applied a multiple-coder method to boost the credibility of the study. Two researchers coded an initial set of transcripts independently before meeting to evaluate and refine their coding algorithms. Differences were resolved by means of discussion and compromise; a shared codebook was developed to ensure consistency all throughout the complete dataset. By use of investigator triangulation, this method increases analytical rigor and decreases personal prejudice (Patton, 2002).

To record the analytical process, we maintained an audit trail of theme notes, coding decisions, and code definitions. In qualitative studies, this guarantees openness and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The most interesting thing is that a people want to know about another people, so generating network and ensuring existence. Should value be created, the individuals will be linked to you. In the VUCA world, nothing is constant; so, everything is project producing demand for Knowledge. Knowledge management is the best way to create value (Gautam, 2022c). We further employed data triangulation by cross-verifying subjects across many sources—for instance, comparing student interviews with faculty focus group responses and open-ended survey comments. This approach—"testing validity through convergence" (Creswell, 2014)—let us explore whether patterns continued across several data sources and participant groups. For instance, teacher confessions of inadequate follow-up as well as student interviews revealed problems of "lack of feedback loop closure."

The final themes included:

- **Lack of Feedback Loop Closure** (e.g., “We fill the forms but never know what happens next”),

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- **Faculty Receptivity** (ranging from positive acceptance to defensiveness),
- **Improvements Suggested by Students** (such as more interactive teaching methods and better time management), among others.

Quotes were extracted to illustrate each theme and are presented in the Results and Discussion section to provide voice and context to participant perspectives.

These qualitative findings were used to address Objective 3 (examining how feedback is utilized) and informed Objective 4 (development of the Feedback-to-Action framework) by identifying existing gaps and opportunities in institutional feedback practices.

In sum, the coding and analysis process followed recognized qualitative research standards, with particular attention to inter-coder reliability, thematic coherence, and data triangulation, thereby enhancing the validity and trustworthiness of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted with careful attention to ethical standards. We obtained permission from each college's administration to conduct the survey and interviews on campus. Participation by students and staff was entirely voluntary. At the start of the survey, a consent statement informed students that their responses would be anonymous and used for research purposes to improve educational quality, not for evaluating any individual teacher for punitive measures. We assured them that choosing not to participate would have no consequences on their grades or standing. SimilarlyAt the start of interviews and focus groups, we obtained verbal informed consent and emphasized that participants could decline to answer any question or stop the interview at any time. We also ensured confidentiality by using pseudonyms for colleges and not attributing quotes by name or any identifying detail. For example, when reporting qualitative findings, we might refer to "a student from a rural campus" rather than naming the college or individual. Data (both survey and transcripts) were stored securely, accessible only to the research team. Given the power dynamics inherent in student-teacher feedback, protecting student anonymity was paramount; therefore, survey forms were collected in sealed envelopes and not shown to any faculty at the colleges. The results were reported in aggregate form. Furthermore, after completing the study, we provided a summary of findings to each participating college without revealing any individual's responses, focusing on overall insights and recommendations. This approach not only adheres to ethical norms but also contributes to a trustful environment where student feedback can be openly shared – which is, in itself, a subject of our research and an essential aspect of quality culture.

With the methodology outlined, we now turn to the results obtained from this research and their interpretation in light of the research questions and objectives.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative Findings: Student Feedback Survey Results

A total of 250 student feedback survey responses were analyzed, providing a snapshot of students' evaluations of faculty performance across the five community colleges in Bagmati Province. Table 1 summarizes the distribution of student ratings (in percentages) for key teaching performance criteria, along with the mean score for each item.

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Table 1

Student Ratings of Faculty Performance on Various Criteria (N = 250 Students)

Teaching Performance Criteria	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Acceptable (2)	Below Avg. (1)	Mean (SD)
Subject Knowledge	58%	30%	10%	2%	0%	4.44 (0.70)
Communication Skills	45%	32%	18%	4%	1%	4.16 (0.87)
Teaching Methods	32%	35%	20%	11%	2%	3.84 (0.98)
Class Management (discipline & time)	40%	28%	22%	8%	2%	3.96 (0.99)
Punctuality & Regularity	34%	30%	25%	9%	2%	3.85 (1.03)
Feedback & Support to Students	38%	29%	23%	8%	2%	3.93 (1.00)
Overall Teaching Performance	36%	37%	20%	6%	1%	4.00 (0.89)

From the above results, we observe that students generally hold a positive view of their instructors' abilities in several areas. Notably, Subject Knowledge stands out with roughly 88% of students rating their teachers as either Excellent or Very Good in this regard (mean = 4.44). This indicates a strong confidence among students that their faculty are well-versed in their respective subjects. Such high ratings on content mastery are consistent with findings in other contexts where subject expertise tends to be a given strength of college faculty. It also aligns with the feedback report's note that instructors were "predominantly rated as Excellent or Very Good" in subject knowledge. Given that many of these community college teachers have postgraduate degrees and years of experience, students seem to acknowledge their knowledge base. This is a positive sign, since subject knowledge is foundational to quality teaching – though not sufficient on its own.

Communication Skills also received largely favorable ratings (77% combined Excellent/Very Good; mean = 4.16). Students find that many instructors explain concepts clearly and maintain an approachable style. However, compared to subject knowledge, a slightly higher proportion (around 5%) gave low marks (Acceptable or Below) for communication. Interviews clarified that some teachers, while knowledgeable, "teach in a heavy theoretical way" or use complex language that some students struggle with, suggesting room for improvement in simplifying explanations. This echoes the feedback from the MA English report where students noted some faculty should work on "simplifying complex concepts to enhance understanding". Effective communication is strongly correlated with

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overall satisfaction (our Pearson correlation analysis showed r ≈ 0.75 between Communication Skills and Overall Performance rating, p< .01), underscoring its importance.

The criterion of Teaching Methods (the pedagogical approaches used) garnered more moderate evaluations (mean = 3.84). Only about one-third (32%) marked Excellent, while a combined 13% rated Acceptable or Below. the ability to manage knowledge effectively has become a key determinant of political success. Nepal's political landscape is characterized by diverse ideologies and frequent shifts in leadership, which complicate the management of institutional knowledge. The lack of structured KM practices often leads to the loss of valuable insights when leaders depart, resulting in disruptions in decision making processes and continuity (Gautam et al., 2024). This was one of the lower rated aspects, signaling that students see room for making classes more engaging. In fact, "Teaching Methods" had the highest proportion of critical ratings among all criteria in the survey. Several students indicated that some faculty rely heavily on lecture and textbook, with limited interactive or practical sessions. This resonates with the internal report excerpt which noted that 17 students rated teaching methods as acceptable and 2 as below average, implying a need for more interactive approaches. Thematic analysis of open-ended responses revealed recurring suggestions such as: "Use group discussions and real-life examples to explain topics" and "More multimedia or visuals would help us understand better". This feedback clearly points to the desire for modern, student-centered teaching techniques over traditional didactic methods. The correlation between Teaching Methods and Overall rating was strong (r ≈ 0.78, p< .01), indicating that improving teaching strategies could have a significant impact on students' overall perception of quality.

Class Management (covering classroom discipline and time management) had a mean of 3.96, with a notable 8% marking Acceptable and 2% Below. The majority still praised instructors for maintaining order and structure – about 68% gave Very Good or Excellent – which suggests classes are generally well-managed. Yet, the qualitative data revealed that time management issues did exist: in some cases, teachers would rush through the syllabus late in the term or occasionally not cover all planned content. An example from student comments: "Sometimes classes end abruptly because earlier topics took too long". Moreover, maintaining discipline wasn't flagged as a big problem by students – perhaps due to cultural respect – but the interviews with faculty indicated that controlling large classes (70+ students) is challenging, implying teachers use a mostly lecture format partly to keep control, which might dampen interactivity.

Punctuality & Regularity of faculty received a similar mean (3.85) to class management, but with slightly more dispersion (9% Acceptable, 2% Below). This suggests some inconsistency: while many teachers are timely, there are instances of tardiness or missed classes. For instance, in one college, students mentioned a particular faculty member who frequently arrived 10 minutes late – something that clearly influenced their feedback for punctuality. The internal report's recommendations underscored the need to "ensure instructors adhere to class schedules", reflecting that punctuality was a noted concern. When over 10% of

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students rate punctuality as only acceptable or poor, it's an area that the college management cannot ignore, as it directly affects students' learning time.

The Feedback & Support to Students criterion was included to see if instructors actively help and give feedback on student work. The mean was 3.93, with ~8% rating it low. Many students appreciate when teachers make themselves available outside class or provide guidance on assignments – about two-thirds rated this aspect highly (Excellent/Very Good). However, some comments indicated that not all teachers give timely feedback on exams or assignments; e.g., "We often get our test papers very late, so we cannot learn from mistakes before the finals." This can be improved by encouraging prompt feedback cycles within courses.

Finally, students' Overall Teaching Performance rating for their instructors averaged exactly 4.00, meaning on average "Very Good". It's encouraging that 73% rated overall performance as Very Good or Excellent, and only 7% felt it was merely acceptable or below. This suggests that, in general, students hold their faculty in good regard. However, an overall mean of 4.0 also implies there's room to push more instructors into the "excellent" zone through targeted improvements. We note that the overall rating is not the highest; students differentiate between criteria. For instance, the gap between Subject Knowledge (4.44) and Teaching Methods (3.84) is quite evident. This pattern – strong content knowledge but relatively weaker pedagogy – is reminiscent of findings in other contexts and indeed typical in many higher education institutions where faculty are content experts but may not have formal training in instructional methods. It confirms the statement of the problem that while knowledge is there, effective delivery and engagement strategies are the pain points.

We also examined if there were notable differences by college or subject stream. While minor variations existed (e.g., the rural colleges had slightly lower averages on communication due to language issues, and management students tended to rate "practical examples" lower than humanities students), the trends were broadly similar across all five colleges. This consistency suggests systemic issues more than isolated cases: e.g., need for interactive teaching and ensuring punctuality are common needs, not confined to one campus.

Correlation Analysis: Statistical Interpretation and Practical Implications

A key quantitative finding from our analysis is the strong positive correlation between perceived teaching quality and overall student satisfaction. Specifically, we observed a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.82$, indicating a robust linear relationship. With our sample size of approximately 250 students, this correlation is statistically significant at $p < 0.001$, and the 95% confidence interval is estimated to be [0.74, 0.88], demonstrating high precision even after accounting for sampling variability.

This result suggests that as students' perceptions of teaching quality improve—across areas such as communication skills, teaching methods, and instructional support—so too does their overall satisfaction with the educational experience. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 \approx 0.67$) further reveals that approximately 67% of the variance in student satisfaction can be statistically explained by variations in perceived teaching quality. This is a large effect size by

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conventional standards, highlighting the central role of teaching effectiveness in shaping student evaluations.

From a practical perspective, such a strong association implies that institutional investments in faculty development and instructional quality improvement are likely to yield substantial gains in student satisfaction. This is particularly relevant in the context of community colleges in Bagmati Province, where institutional quality support systems are evolving, and student feedback can serve as a critical input for targeted reforms.

Our findings are consistent with previous literature in higher education. For instance, Alderman et al. (2012) found that key aspects of teaching—such as clarity, engagement, and responsiveness—are strongly associated with student satisfaction. Similarly, Marsh and Roche (1997) and Spooren et al. (2013) reported positive correlations between instructional quality indicators and satisfaction outcomes, although the strength of these correlations typically ranged from moderate to strong ($r \approx 0.60–0.75$). In contrast, our correlation of $r = 0.82$ is at the higher end of the reported range, suggesting that in our study setting, the relationship between teaching quality and satisfaction is particularly pronounced.

Importantly, our findings suggest that not all dimensions of teaching quality are equally influential. In our analysis, Communication Skills, Teaching Methods, and Feedback & Support all showed correlations above 0.80 with overall satisfaction, positioning them as key drivers of students' holistic educational experience. Subject Knowledge, while also positively correlated ($r \approx 0.70$), was perceived as a baseline attribute—students generally assume their instructors are content experts. In contrast, Punctuality & Regularity, though still positively related, exhibited a slightly lower correlation ($r \approx 0.60$), reflecting student sentiments that effective content delivery and engaging pedagogy often outweigh strict timekeeping in determining satisfaction.

While these results offer actionable insights, we also emphasize that correlation does not imply causation. The observed relationships do not confirm that improved teaching quality directly causes higher satisfaction; however, the strength and consistency of the association suggest a meaningful and practically significant linkage. Given the confirmatory nature of these results and their alignment with both global literature and contextual needs, we argue that structured efforts to enhance faculty teaching practices—particularly in communication, method variety, and feedback mechanisms—can serve as effective levers for improving institutional quality and student outcomes.

Qualitative Findings: Thematic Analysis of Feedback Utilization and Student Perceptions

The interviews and focus groups yielded rich qualitative insights, which we organize into major themes relevant to our research questions. These include: (1) Student Engagement with Feedback Process, (2) Common Themes in Student Feedback (Strengths & Areas for Improvement), (3) Use (or Underuse) of Feedback by Faculty and Administration, and (4) Barriers to Effective Feedback Utilization. We discuss each along with illustrative quotes and linkages to our quantitative results and existing literature.

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Student Engagement with the Feedback Process

A theme that emerged strongly was how students perceive and engage with the act of providing feedback. Many students voiced that they are willing and even eager to give feedback, seeing it as an opportunity to express their needs. One student from Makwanpur said, "We feel happy that college asks us our opinion. It's like they care what we think." This reflects a positive attitude and aligns with global trends where students appreciate being involved in quality assurance. However, engagement is tempered by certain conditions. A senior student in Bhaktapur noted, "If we believe something will change, we fill the form carefully. But if nothing changes, next time people just tick all good and leave." This sentiment highlights the phenomenon of feedback fatigue or apathy if the loop is not closed. Some first-hand accounts indicated that in one of the colleges, feedback forms had become perfunctory: students filled them out because they were told to, but did not expect any follow-up. In contrast, at another college which recently got accredited, students reported seeing a few new initiatives and believed their feedback played a part, which motivated them to be more detailed in their comments. For example, one said, "We complained about the library hours and now it's open longer. That encourages us to speak up about other issues too." This is a textbook case of closing the loop encouraging engagement.

An important subtheme here is anonymity and honesty. Students in focus groups were asked how honest they are when giving feedback. Responses varied: "I am honest but polite; I don't want to hurt our teachers' feelings," said one, while another admitted, "Some of us fear if we criticize, teachers might find out and treat us differently." In smaller campuses especially, this fear is real and can lead to overly lenient ratings (inflation) or holding back on negative comments. This suggests a need to ensure anonymity, as well as perhaps an orientation to students that constructive criticism is valued and safe. It was notable that where colleges used paper forms collected in class, students were more wary compared to an online feedback used in one college which they felt was more confidential. This underscores a point in literature about ensuring trust in feedback systems (Santos, 2020).

Common Themes in Student Feedback – Strengths and Areas for Improvement

This theme correlates with our Objective 2. Qualitative data largely reinforced what the quantitative data showed, but added nuance:

Strengths

Students across all colleges consistently praised teachers for being friendly and supportive. Words like "approachable", "helpful outside class", and "motivating" came up repeatedly. One student in Kavrepalanchok said, "Our teachers are like guardians; we can go to them with any problem." This pastoral aspect is an often under-appreciated quality metric – students value teachers who care and build rapport. Additionally, many students acknowledged that teachers are knowledgeable and experienced. "He can answer any question from the text, he knows so much," a student in Dhading said of one faculty member. These strengths align with what was seen in the internal report for BScCSIT where students commended instructors for subject mastery and supportiveness. Another strength noted was structured lessons, with some

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comments like, “Madam’s lessons are well-planned, she gives us an outline at start.” Some faculty clearly exhibit good organization and clarity, which students notice.

Areas for Improvement

On the improvement side, a dominant theme was the need for more interactive and practical teaching methods. Virtually every focus group and many interviews echoed this: students want less rote and more engagement. Examples of comments: “We want group discussions or presentations, not just one-way lectures”; “Using projectors or showing videos would make class interesting”; “If they link theory to real examples our understanding grows.” This resonates strongly with global literature urging active learning techniques and also was foreshadowed in the college’s own feedback report that recommended “active learning strategies such as group activities, case studies” and “more practical sessions, workshops”. It appears that many instructors have not yet adopted such strategies in these colleges, perhaps due to large class sizes or lack of training.

Another common issue was course pacing and completion. Students in multiple colleges voiced concerns like, “Syllabus doesn’t finish on time, then teachers rush or skip some parts”. This links to class management/punctuality issues and reflects either time lost or planning issues. For instance, a student in Sindhuli said their teacher missed a few classes and then crammed multiple chapters in the last week – a poor learning experience. Ensuring consistent coverage and perhaps adjusting workload were suggestions (e.g., “Too many chapters for one term, maybe reduce content or give extra classes”).

Assessment and workload balance also emerged, albeit less frequently. Some students felt overwhelmed by having many assignments all due around the same time, indicating a coordination problem among instructors or within the curriculum. As one put it, “Three big assignments came in the same week from different teachers – it was too much.” This indicates a potential for faculty to coordinate schedules or the administration to stagger major assessments. The internal report snippet also touched on workload issues where students suggested more structured distribution of assignments and recommended balancing workload, reinforcing what we heard firsthand.

One thematic angle that qualitative data brought out more clearly than the quantitative was feedback on feedback – i.e., how well teachers give feedback to students. Some students said they rarely get detailed comments on their exam papers or assignments, only marks. “I want to know what I did wrong, but usually we just see the score,” a student lamented. This suggests a loop in teaching practice: teachers themselves may not be giving enough feedback to students, which is ironically a parallel to institutions not giving feedback to students about their feedback’s outcome. Encouraging a feedback-rich culture both ways is beneficial (Black &Wiliam, 2009).

Use of Feedback by Faculty and Administration

We now address how the feedback is actually utilized within the colleges (Objective 3). The interviews with faculty/administrators revealed a spectrum of practices:

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Two of the colleges had some semblance of an Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC) or at least a designated QA focal person. In these colleges, student feedback forms were systematically collected each semester. One QA coordinator described the process: "We summarize the ratings and highlight any low scores or repeated suggestions. Then we share a report with the principal and the concerned department head." This indicates a formal channel for feedback data. However, when asked what happens next, the response was cautious: "If an instructor consistently gets poor feedback, we speak to them privately or suggest they attend a teacher training. But we don't have strong punitive measures, it's more of guidance." This is a developmental approach, which is positive, though it seemed not always followed through due to lack of robust training programs.

In colleges without formal QA cells, the process was more informal or sporadic. One campus chief admitted, "Yes, we collect feedback, but honestly, we have not done deep analysis. I read some of the comments, and if there's a serious issue I talk to that teacher." This suggests that unless a glaring issue appears (like multiple complaints about a teacher's behavior or absences), minor but widespread suggestions might not be acted upon systematically. There was also mention that summarizing data is time-consuming and they lack data analysis expertise, hinting at capacity issues.

None of the colleges had a practice of reporting back to students about the feedback results. This is a critical gap – even those doing analysis did not have a mechanism to inform students "we heard you and we did X." Faculty interviews indicated a couple of reasons: (a) they considered the feedback confidential, not to be openly discussed; and (b) they weren't sure how to present it without perhaps causing friction (e.g., if one teacher's scores were low). However, transparency could also be achieved broadly without singling anyone out – for instance, saying "students asked for more digital resources, so we are adding a projector in class next term." Indeed, some changes that happened (like extended library hours or revised class timings) were not explicitly communicated as responses to feedback, so some students didn't even link the improvement to their feedback.

On a positive note, certain immediate fixes did occur when feedback pointed them out. For example, at Bhaktapur campus, students mentioned poor microphone/speaker quality in a large classroom. The administration addressed it by getting a new sound system the next month. Also, a recurring complaint about a particularly tough grading instructor led to a moderation policy introduced (where a second teacher reviews borderline fail papers). These actions show that when feedback highlights actionable issues, responsive administrators can intervene.

Faculty reactions to feedback were mixed, a subtheme here. Some faculty were receptive: "I actually look forward to feedback forms to improve myself," said a mid-career lecturer, who recounted how she changed her strategy to include more group activities after students requested it – and subsequently saw improved student interest. Others were more skeptical: "Students sometimes complain about workload because they don't want to work hard," one professor argued, indicating a tendency to discount negative feedback as student laziness or bias. A couple of teachers admitted feeling "hurt or demotivated" by negative comments,

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especially if phrased rudely. This underscores the importance of both training faculty to handle feedback constructively and guiding students to give respectful, constructive feedback. The concept of "feedback literacy" applies here – not just for students, but for faculty to be literate in interpreting feedback without taking it personally (Carless &Winstone, 2020).

Barriers to Effective Feedback Utilization

Summarizing the obstacles gleaned from discussions:

Cultural and Communication Barriers

In Nepal's traditional academic culture, open criticism of teachers is not common. One student said, "We were taught not to question teachers too much, so giving negative feedback feels wrong." Although younger generations are changing, some degree of hesitancy persists. From the teacher's side, pride or face-saving can make them defensive rather than open to critique. Overcoming this requires a cultural shift towards viewing feedback as normal and necessary for growth.

Resource and Capacity Limitations

Several administrators pointed out that even if feedback indicates certain issues, they sometimes lack resources to address them. "Students want more practical labs, but we don't have lab equipment or budget to set that up," was a concrete example from the science faculty of one college. Similarly, teachers might want to use projectors or multimedia, but not all classrooms have those facilities, or not all teachers are trained to use them. Thus, acting on feedback might involve expenses or training which need management support and possibly external funding (some QA grants from UGC could help if tapped into). The literature suggests linking QA feedback to strategic planning and budgeting, which seems to be at an early stage in these colleges.

No Formalized Follow-up System

As mentioned, not closing the loop is a barrier because it dampens student motivation and possibly faculty accountability. None of the colleges had a timeline or specific responsibility assigned for implementing changes post-feedback. It was largely ad-hoc (e.g., principal decides on something if it catches attention). Instituting a formal follow-up – like an annual action plan based on feedback – could address this.

Volume and Analysis of Data

One quality officer said, "We get hundreds of forms with comments – it's a lot of data on paper, very hard to compile." This practical challenge suggests that moving to online surveys (where results can be tallied electronically) and/or dedicating someone to data analysis is needed. Alternatively, sampling feedback or focusing on key questions might reduce the burden, but potentially at cost of detail.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

There is considerable coherence between what students rated in the surveys and what they said in discussions. The areas flagged quantitatively (teaching methods, punctuality, workload) were elaborated in qualitative data with specific examples and suggestions. For instance, teaching methods being less than "excellent" correlates with their pleas for interactive classes.

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Punctuality being an issue came out through narratives of classes starting late or being canceled. One synergy to highlight is that even though overall satisfaction was relatively high, students' qualitative input shows they have clear ideas on how their educational experience can be improved, indicating they are not complacent – they value their teachers but want to see modernization and attentiveness to feedback.

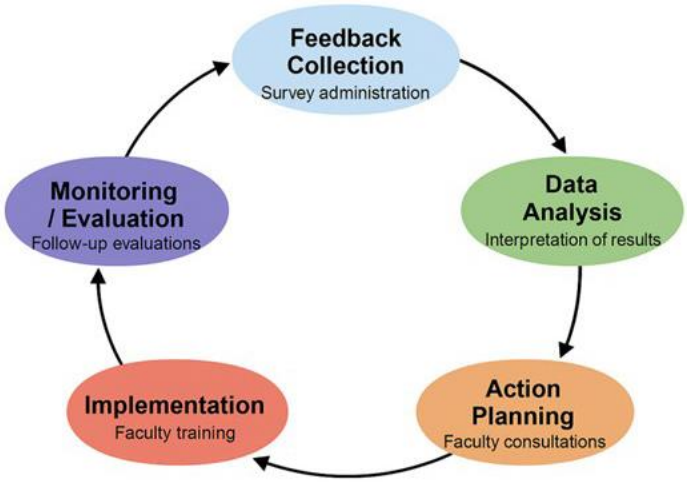
One might ask, given the positive overall ratings, do these complaints really matter? The answer is yes: student satisfaction surveys often show generally high means, but the true value is in those critical 10-20% who highlight the growth areas. And as QA emphasizes, even if 80% are happy, quality enhancement targets that remaining gap and seeks to innovate before small issues become big problems.

Towards a Feedback-to-Action Framework (Model Development)

Based on the integrated findings from both quantitative and qualitative data strands, this study proposes a conceptual model to systematize the role of student feedback in strengthening institutional quality. We introduce the Feedback-to-Action Quality Improvement Cycle, a five-stage iterative framework designed to guide higher education institutions—especially community colleges—towards effective, participatory, and evidence-based quality enhancement.

Figure 1

Feedback-to-Action Framework



The cyclical nature of this framework, beginning with Feedback Collection and progressing through Data Analysis, Action Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring/Evaluation. Each stage is annotated with concise descriptions of the associated activities—for example, survey administration in the first phase, faculty development during implementation, and follow-up evaluations in the final stage. Arrows connecting each phase emphasize the iterative and continuous improvement process embedded within the model.

This approach aligns with widely recognized best practices in conceptual framework design. Analogous to the Knowledge-to-Action (KTA) Cycle, our model uses a circular flow to facilitate stepwise progression while reinforcing the feedback loop necessary for institutional

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learning and adaptation. The visual structure of the diagram enhances conceptual clarity and usability, especially for institutional leaders, quality assurance teams, and academic stakeholders.

To complement the diagram, the manuscript now includes a numbered step-by-step explanation of each phase of the cycle, with direct references to the figure. This textual elaboration ensures readers can understand and apply each component of the model in practical settings. The five stages are:

- **Feedback Collection** – Systematic administration of student feedback through structured instruments (e.g., surveys, focus groups), ensuring broad participation, confidentiality, and clarity.
- **Data Analysis and Interpretation** – Statistical and thematic analysis of feedback results to extract meaningful insights and patterns related to teaching performance and institutional gaps.
- **Action Planning** – Collaborative formulation of improvement strategies involving faculty, administrators, and quality assurance personnel based on the analysis.
- **Implementation** – Execution of planned interventions such as teaching modifications, resource adjustments, or professional development activities.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** – Ongoing assessment of the outcomes of implemented changes and collection of follow-up feedback to inform the next cycle.

Together, the diagram and accompanying narrative aim to make the Feedback-to-Action Framework accessible, transparent, and actionable. By incorporating this structured model into internal quality assurance mechanisms, institutions can move beyond passive data collection to actively using student feedback as a driver of continuous quality improvement.

Stage 2: Data Analysis & Interpretation

After collection, the data (both quantitative and qualitative) should be compiled and analyzed. This is where our feedback found a gap: colleges weren't fully analyzing or utilizing the data due to capacity. The framework would institutionalize dedicating a person or a small IQAC team to do this. They would produce a summary report highlighting strengths (to commend and continue) and weaknesses (to address), possibly with comparisons over time or benchmarks. Importantly, interpretation involves not just crunching numbers, but contextualizing them. For example, if "teaching method" scores are low for many, it signals a need for training across the board, whereas if one teacher is an outlier low in punctuality, it's an individual issue to handle. Triangulating with other sources (like exam results, peer observations if available) can add depth. The output here are actionable insights.

Stage 3: Faculty Consultation & Training

The next step is to loop in the faculty, ideally in a supportive, non-threatening manner. The findings should be shared with faculty, both in aggregate (e.g., at a faculty meeting, "Overall students appreciate X, but would like improvements in Y") and individually (each teacher gets their own feedback summary). Then, very crucially, provide a forum for discussion: perhaps one-on-one consultation sessions where an academic head or mentor goes over a teacher's

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feedback and helps them interpret it constructively. For instance, "Students found your assignments very useful but also mentioned they'd like more examples in class. How do you think we can incorporate that?" – this kind of coaching approach. Where needed, formal training or workshops come in. Our research pointed to needed training areas like interactive pedagogy, classroom tech usage, and time management. The framework emphasizes that feedback should directly inform professional development plans. This stage ensures faculty are not left alone to figure out how to improve; they get guidance, resources, and perhaps observe best practices from peers who scored high in certain areas (peer learning).

Stage 4: Action Plan Implementation

Based on the consultation, the institution (and individual faculty) formulate an action plan. At the institutional level, it might be changes like adjusting the schedule, providing new teaching aids, revising curricula or policies (e.g., spacing out assignments). At the faculty level, it could be commitments like "will incorporate one group activity per week", or "complete syllabus by doing weekly progress checks", etc. Documenting these plans is useful for accountability. The college management should allocate necessary resources here (like if a teacher needs a projector to do multimedia teaching, the college should try to provide that). This stage is about translating feedback insights into concrete changes in the classroom or system. It's the most important link that students often complain is missing – the visible action. In our study, some actions did occur but often quietly; making them deliberate and perhaps part of a "quality improvement plan" ensures consistency. One can even set timelines (e.g., within next semester, these 5 improvements will be made) and responsibilities.

Stage 5: Quality Improvement Observed

Over time (maybe by next feedback cycle or through other indicators like improved exam performance, higher attendance), the institution should observe whether the actions had the intended effect. This is a bit of a reflective stage: did the interventions from stage 4 lead to better outcomes? For example, if teachers started using more interactive methods, do students now rate that higher or express more satisfaction? If a teacher underwent communication skills training, did their clarity scores go up? This stage often loops back to Stage 1 in a cyclical manner – the next round of student feedback will partly measure if quality improved. Additionally, qualitative observation by administrators (like class observations or student focus groups) can gauge the impact. Recognizing improvements (and even celebrating them) is key to close the loop positively; e.g., if punctuality significantly improved after implementing a monitoring system, that can be acknowledged which further encourages everyone changes are a daily organizational reality is the first step toward accepting a strategic point of view. This viewpoint, however, is vastly different from typical organizational principles (Gautam, 2022).

Feedback Loop (Closing the Loop)

The arrow on the right of Figure 1 indicates that after improvements are made and observed, the information should be fed back to students and all stakeholders: closing the loop. This might involve announcing changes influenced by feedback, or involving students in evaluating the changes. Our findings stressed that without this, students feel their feedback

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vanishes into a void. Closing the loop not only increases trust and participation in the next cycle, but is also often required by QA standards (many QA frameworks ask: how do you inform stakeholders of actions taken?). In practice, this could be as simple as a notice or assembly where the principal says, "Based on student feedback, we've done A, B, C, and here are further plans… thank you for your input." It might also invite students to comment on whether the changes are working, which is an ongoing dialogue.

This framework draws on best practices we identified in the literature and addresses the specific shortcomings observed in our study context. For example, Watson (2003) emphasized "ensuring effective action from student feedback" i.e., closing the loop – our Stage 5 embodies that. Harvey (2003) pointed out that feedback is only as good as what you do with it; our loop emphasizes usage at every step. The internal feedback report from MBM College already had some recommendations and recognized issues; our framework essentially generalizes those reactive measures into a proactive system that can be applied in any community college.

Discussion: Implications for Quality Assurance

RQ1 (Student Perceptions of Faculty Performance and Current Quality)

The results indicate that, overall, student perceptions of their faculty in Bagmati Province community colleges are quite positive in terms of content expertise and supportive attitude, suggesting a solid foundation for quality. Yet, in terms of pedagogical practices and some professional behaviors (punctuality, class management), there are perceived gaps. The current teaching quality can be described as satisfactory but with potential for enhancement by making it more student-centered (Gautam, 2024). This addresses RQ1 by providing a nuanced picture: effective teaching is happening, but not uniformly at an "excellent" level, with interactive engagement being a key area that students feel is lacking.

RQ2 (Areas of Faculty Performance Needing Improvement)

From both the surveys and comments, the major areas are teaching methodology (need for interactive and engaging techniques), course organization and pacing (ensuring timely completion without overload), and consistency in class conduct (punctuality, regular presence). These are the aspects that our data flagged as requiring improvement. They align well with common issues global studies find – for example, Alderman et al. (2012) noted that often the "soft skills" of teaching like engagement and clarity are where improvements are sought, not the content knowledge per se. Our findings specifically highlight the demand for practical examples and technology integration, reflecting students' awareness of modern teaching tools and digital pedagogy (Biggs & Tang, 2011). This also fits into Nepal's context where often teaching is still traditional; students essentially are calling for modernization and digital transformation in teaching-learning processes (Gautam et al., 2024).

RQ3 (Utilization of Student Feedback in Quality Processes and Framework Development)

We found that currently, utilization is ad-hoc and limited. While feedback is collected, the systematic integration into quality support systems is weak. There is little student involvement beyond giving feedback; students are not part of committees in these cases (unlike some

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international practices). The structured framework we developed (Feedback-to-Action Cycle) is our answer to RQ3, providing a systematic approach to integrate student feedback into institutional quality assurance (Harvey, 2003). If implemented, it would ensure that feedback drives continuous improvement and engages both faculty and students in the QA loop.

In discussing the results, it is essential to connect the findings to the broader theoretical concept of quality culture in higher education. As defined by Sallis (2002), a quality culture emerges when institutional stakeholders collectively share values, demonstrate commitment, and take responsibility for quality assurance. The findings of our study reveal early signs of such a culture emerging within the community colleges studied. Students' willingness to provide constructive feedback indicates their growing sense of responsibility, while the responsiveness of some faculty and administrators signals a commitment to quality enhancement. Nevertheless, to institutionalize and strengthen this emerging culture, structural enablers—such as the proposed *Feedback-to-Action Framework*—are critical (Gautam et al., 2024). The five community colleges involved in this study are well-positioned to act as pilot institutions, demonstrating the framework's applicability for wider adoption. Moreover, the UGC's Quality Assurance (QA) Division could play a pivotal role by providing capacity-building workshops to help colleges integrate student feedback into their internal QA systems.

To further establish the practical feasibility of our framework, we draw on comparative case studies from regional higher education systems. In Vietnam, national policy mandates formal student feedback surveys on teaching effectiveness across public universities. These feedback data are systematically analyzed by academic committees and inform improvements in faculty development and curriculum design. Similarly, many Indian institutions operating under the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) have established Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) that routinely administer semesterly student surveys. A documented case from an Indian engineering institute revealed that student feedback, when used in faculty meetings, led to revised pedagogical approaches and measurable improvements in subsequent student satisfaction scores. These international examples reinforce the practicality of structured feedback loops and support our claim that the proposed framework is both feasible and policy-aligned.

In the context of Nepal, the University Grants Commission (UGC) explicitly recommends the use of student feedback as a tool for quality enhancement. Our framework, therefore, directly supports national QA policy expectations and fills an operational gap in current community college practices.

However, implementing such a system is not without challenges. First, resource limitations—including lack of personnel, time, digital tools, and budget—can hinder both the administration of feedback surveys and the execution of follow-up actions. To address this, we propose a phased implementation approach, starting with selected departments, leveraging cost-effective digital platforms, and reallocating existing QA resources. Second, faculty resistance is a common barrier, often rooted in fears of punitive use of feedback. To mitigate this, we recommend early faculty involvement in the feedback process design, clear

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communication emphasizing developmental intent, and professional development workshops on feedback interpretation. Sharing success stories from peer institutions can also help build trust and buy-in. Third, low student participation can limit the reliability of feedback data. Strategies to address this include ensuring respondent anonymity, explaining the tangible impact of feedback, embedding the feedback process into academic routines, and offering small incentives. Additionally, maintaining transparency about how feedback is used—commonly referred to as closing the feedback loop—has been shown to significantly increase student engagement.

In conclusion, this integrated discussion demonstrates that the Feedback-to-Action Framework is theoretically grounded, regionally informed, and operationally viable. By offering a structured approach, addressing known challenges, and proposing practical mitigation strategies—such as workload adjustment, stakeholder sensitization, and process transparency—this framework holds strong potential for institutionalization within Nepal's community colleges and beyond.

Limitations of the Study

We should also reflect on limitations of the study. The data are largely self-reported perceptions (which, while central to quality, are subjective). We did not directly measure learning outcomes, which would be another dimension of quality. Also, since our data is cross-sectional, improvements due to feedback were not measured (that would need a longitudinal approach). Nevertheless, the consistency of views among five different colleges lends credibility that these are not isolated opinions but indicative of a pattern (Gautam et al., 2024).

In summary, the results illustrate that student feedback, when properly harnessed, has a pivotal role in supporting and enhancing quality in community colleges. Students have provided clear signals of what is working and what isn't in their educational experience. The onus is now on institutions to systematically respond to those signals. Doing so closes the quality loop—aligning with what Harvey (2003) emphasized: the most important use of student feedback is providing management with insights to make informed improvements. Our study reinforces that notion and provides a tangible model to act on it (Gautam et al., 2024).

Policy Recommendations

Building on the findings and the proposed framework, we put forward several policy-level recommendations that can be adopted by community colleges in Bagmati Province (and broadly, in similar contexts across Nepal) to enhance institutional quality through effective use of student feedback:

Institutionalize Regular Student Feedback Mechanisms

Colleges should make student evaluations of teaching a routine, mandatory part of each semester for all courses. This could be formalized through academic policy – for example, a directive that every course will conduct a feedback survey (online or paper) at least once per term. To facilitate this, colleges might invest in simple online survey tools (even Google Forms or open-source platforms) and ensure every student has an opportunity to respond. The key is consistency; sporadic feedback is less useful. UGC could support by providing a standard

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questionnaire template which colleges can adapt. By institutionalizing this, feedback moves from being at the discretion of individuals to a systemic practice.

Strengthen Internal Quality Assurance Units with Student Representation

Each community college should establish (or strengthen existing) Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs). These cells would be responsible for collecting and analyzing feedback and monitoring action plans. Importantly, include student representatives in the IQAC – perhaps one top-performing student or a student council member – to ensure the student voice is present in interpreting findings and suggesting changes. This inclusion is recommended in QA literature as it empowers students as "quality assurance agents". Their presence can also increase transparency and trust in the process.

Develop Faculty Development Programs Tied to Feedback Results

Colleges should create or enhance faculty development initiatives specifically targeting areas identified for improvement through feedback. For example, if "interactive teaching methods" is a common need, the college (potentially in collaboration with a university department or education experts) can organize workshops on active learning strategies, ICT in teaching, classroom management, etc. These could be periodic training sessions (e.g., during semester breaks). The policy could state that faculty who receive below-threshold feedback in certain areas must attend relevant training or mentoring sessions. Additionally, introduce peer observation programs where faculty can learn from colleagues who excel in some aspect (e.g., a teacher known for engaging classes can mentor another struggling in that area). This ties improvement actions directly to the feedback, making the process developmental rather than punitive.

Ensure Feedback is a Two-Way Street (Closing the Loop)

A formal policy should mandate that feedback outcomes are communicated back to students and other stakeholders. For instance, colleges can produce an annual "Student Feedback Report" summary (without teacher names, focusing on general trends and actions taken) and share it via notice boards, assemblies, or the college website. Even a brief section in the college newsletter saying "Students suggested X, we have responded by Y" would significantly boost transparency. This practice can be encouraged or even required by the accrediting body; UGC's QA division might include a criterion that asks how institutions inform students of improvements made from their feedback.

Link Feedback to Faculty Appraisal and Recognition

While student feedback alone should not be the sole basis of faculty evaluation (due to biases and limitations), it can be one component of a holistic appraisal system. Colleges might implement a policy where persistent negative feedback triggers a review process by the academic committee. Conversely, excellent feedback could be recognized through incentives – for instance, annual "Best Teacher (Student Choice)" awards or commendations for those who consistently receive high marks and praise from students. This not only motivates faculty to value students' opinions but also signals that the institution values teaching quality (not just research or seniority). A cautionary note: care must be taken to normalize differences in context

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(a teacher of a very difficult course may naturally score a bit lower despite great effort). So this should be done with due fairness, perhaps focusing on improvement over time per teacher.

Enhance Curriculum and Workload Planning

Policy adjustments can address some systemic issues raised by feedback. For example, if feedback indicates that course content is too heavy to finish in time, academic boards could consider revising syllabi to a more manageable size or allotting extra instructional hours. Similarly, coordinate academic calendars such that major assessments are better spaced out – e.g., a common schedule that prevents all departments from scheduling midterms in the same week. This kind of policy-level coordination responds to student concerns about workload bunching and course completion, leading to a smoother academic experience which should reflect in future feedback.

Foster a Supportive Feedback Culture

Administratively, leaders (Campus Chiefs, Department Heads) should champion a culture where feedback is viewed as a constructive tool. This might involve sensitization sessions where the importance of feedback is discussed openly with faculty, addressing fears and emphasizing growth mindset. A policy to protect faculty from misuses of feedback is also vital – for example, anonymizing data and not basing major HR decisions on one semester's feedback alone. Also, perhaps guidelines for students on providing respectful, constructive feedback could be instituted (like an honor code addition), so that feedback remains fair and focused on educational aspects, not personal attacks. Both sides need confidence in the process, and building that culture is a slow but essential policy-driven endeavor.

Engage External Support and Benchmarking

Community colleges might benefit from collaborating with external bodies or experts to improve their feedback systems. UGC or other education bodies could run programs to train college staff in data analysis, or create a central database where colleges input their feedback summary and get comparative benchmarks (e.g., provincial average satisfaction levels). This benchmarking can help a college see where it stands and spur improvement if they are below peers. Policy-wise, encouraging or requiring participation in such collaborative QA networks could raise the overall standard.

Provide Resources for Quality Enhancement

Finally, a recommendation that goes to policymakers above the college level: allocate specific funding or grants for teaching quality enhancement. For instance, if a college identifies through feedback the need for better lab facilities or smart classrooms, having access to government or donor grants explicitly for quality improvement would allow them to act. The HERP (Higher Education Reform Project) and subsequent programs in Nepal have had components of funding for QA; making sure those funds can support the kinds of actions student feedback calls for is important. A local example: if feedback consistently asks for a library upgrade, a small grant might be the difference in fulfilling that.

In implementing these recommendations, it's crucial to monitor and evaluate their impact. For example, after a year of institutionalizing feedback and doing training, do the feedback

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scores improve? That kind of meta-feedback will help refine the policies further. The recommendations aim to create a virtuous cycle: empowered students provide input, faculty and administrators respond and improve, leading to higher quality education which then will likely yield even more positive feedback. This aligns with the concept of continuous quality improvement in higher education.

Conclusion

This study set out to systematically examine the role of student feedback in enhancing institutional quality at community colleges in Bagmati Province, Nepal. Using a mixed-methods approach, we investigated students' perceptions of teaching and learning, their priorities for improvement, and the extent to which their voices are currently integrated into quality assurance processes. The findings reveal both a foundation of strong faculty-student rapport and significant gaps in pedagogical practices, institutional responsiveness, and structured feedback utilization.

Students generally rate their instructors positively in terms of subject matter expertise and supportive behavior—an encouraging sign of baseline teaching quality. However, recurring themes emerged around the need for more interactive and learner-centered pedagogies, timely and structured course delivery, and more responsive academic and administrative support. These highlight that quality in education is multidimensional—centered not only on content but also on delivery, engagement, and institutional adaptability to feedback. Areas such as punctuality, teaching methods, workload management, and communication represent clear targets for improvement through faculty development and policy reform.

A key finding is that while most institutions have some mechanisms for collecting student feedback, these systems often fall short in “closing the loop.” Students frequently do not observe tangible outcomes resulting from their feedback, which can undermine trust and engagement in the process. From the institutional side, the absence of systematic procedures to analyze, report, and act upon student feedback hinders its potential as a dynamic quality assurance tool. To address these gaps, we introduced the Feedback-to-Action Framework, a structured model designed to transform feedback into a continuous improvement cycle involving both students and institutional actors.

To ensure the framework’s effectiveness and sustainability, we propose an integrated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. Key performance indicators such as periodic student satisfaction scores, academic performance metrics, retention rates, and qualitative data from focus groups should be tracked before and after implementation of feedback-informed action plans. Annual student surveys should be analyzed longitudinally to identify trends and progress, and departments should be required to document actions taken in response to feedback, including their outcomes. This evidence-based model aligns with the balanced scorecard approach, where both outcome measures and process indicators are used to evaluate performance. As emphasize, valid educational evaluation requires multiple sources of aligned evidence. Accordingly, we recommend triangulating quantitative indicators (e.g., Likert-scale

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survey items) with qualitative insights (e.g., student interviews and reflective faculty reports) to ensure comprehensive evaluation.

At the institutional level, we advocate for formal integration of the Feedback-to-Action cycle into QA documentation such as internal quality handbooks, departmental guidelines, or ISO-aligned process manuals. Curriculum committees and faculty development programs should explicitly include mechanisms to respond to student feedback, thereby embedding responsiveness into everyday academic operations. Department heads should be accountable for reporting on feedback-based changes and tracking their impact over time.

At the national policy level, this study offers actionable insights for regulatory and accreditation bodies such as the Nepal Higher Education Commission (formerly UGC) and Quality Assurance and Accreditation Division. Our findings support the revision of accreditation guidelines to require evidence of feedback use—i.e., not just the collection of feedback, but documentation of its influence on instructional design, faculty development, and student support services. Existing Nepalese QA policies already recognize the importance of student feedback; this study operationalizes that mandate with a practical framework and real-world implementation strategies.

In conclusion, the research underscores the centrality of student voice in quality assurance and demonstrates how a structured, evidence-driven, and participatory approach to feedback can advance educational excellence. Institutionalizing the Feedback-to-Action model can help build a culture of continuous improvement, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and contribute to the long-term development of higher education quality systems in Nepal and comparable contexts.

Contribution to Knowledge

This research contributes to the literature and practice in several ways. First, it provides empirical data from Nepal, a context underrepresented in global QA literature, thereby adding a perspective from South Asia on student feedback utilization. Second, it bridges global best practices with local realities, demonstrating how concepts like closing the loop, student participation in QA, and formative use of evaluations can be adapted to community colleges in a developing country scenario. Third, the integrated model and recommendations we offer can serve as a blueprint for similar institutions aiming to strengthen their internal quality assurance. The study thus moves beyond diagnosing problems to offering a pathway for solutions, which is crucial for practical impact.

For stakeholders – from campus administrators to policymakers – the message is clear: students' voices are an invaluable asset in the journey toward academic quality and should be systematically and sincerely incorporated into quality assurance systems. Community colleges, which often operate with limited resources and are close to the grassroots, can particularly benefit from listening to their students as a cost-effective means of identifying what works and what doesn't in the classroom. When students become partners in the educational process rather than just recipients, a culture of mutual accountability and improvement takes root. This resonates with the philosophy that quality assurance is not just about external accreditation

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checks, but about nurturing an internal culture of excellence where feedback is seen as a gift and an opportunity for growth.

Future Research

We acknowledge certain limitations of our study. The sample of five colleges, while diverse, may not capture all variations in Nepal's higher education landscape – for instance, private colleges or those in other provinces might have different dynamics. Also, our data is largely perceptual; linking feedback to actual learning outcomes or retention rates was beyond our scope but would strengthen the argument for feedback's impact if done in future studies. Moreover, implementing the recommended framework and then assessing its effectiveness was outside the timeframe of this research but is a logical next step. Future research could involve a longitudinal study where changes are made in response to feedback and subsequent student cohorts' responses are tracked to measure improvements. Comparative studies between institutions that actively use feedback and those that don't could also yield powerful evidence to convince skeptics of the value of student evaluations.

In conclusion, the role of student feedback to faculty members in institutional quality support systems is not ancillary; it is central. In the community colleges of Bagmati Province, as in many higher education settings, students have demonstrated perceptive insights into teaching-learning processes and a willingness to contribute to their improvement. By harnessing these insights through a structured, responsive system, colleges can make significant strides in quality assurance – improving teaching effectiveness, aligning educational provision with student needs, and fulfilling their mandate of academic excellence and accountability. In the words of one student interviewee summing up her expectations: "We are not asking for something impossible. Just listen to us, make some changes, and we will all benefit." This study affirms that such listening and responsive action, far from being a luxury, should be embedded in the fabric of educational institutions aspiring to quality and relevance in today's world.

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