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The Letter Grading System: A Perception and Practice at Secondary Level

Dhruba Bahadur Singh
Research Scholar
singhdhurba0325@gmail.com
https://orchid.org/0009-0005-9056-3337

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Abstract

This study looks at the perspectives and obstacles of implementing the Letter Grading System (LGS) in the Secondary instruction Examination (SEE), with an emphasis on mathematics instruction in Birendranagar, Surkhet. It discovers that, while teachers and students largely support LGS, substantial misunderstandings exist among stakeholders, resulting in uncertainty, frustration, and resistance. The findings highlight the critical need for planned training and awareness campaigns to clarify the Grade Point Average (GPA) system. Notably, the LGS tends to minimize student dropout rates while expanding prospects for academic success. These findings support recommendations for pedagogical and policy changes to better match assessment techniques with classroom reality. The implications of this research are manifold: it calls for reforms in school evaluation mechanisms and suggests that with adequate pedagogical support, the LGS can enhance classroom practices in mathematics. The study underscores the potential of LGS to act as a catalyst for educational transformation and encourages further research to deepen understanding and refine strategies for effective implementation in diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: Letter Grading system, Perception, Mathematics, Barriers

Background of the Study

Assessment is frequently confused and confounded with evaluation. The purpose of an evaluation is to judge the quality of a performance or work product against a standard. The fundamental nature of assessment is that a mentor values helping a mentee and is willing to expend the effort to provide quality feedback that will enhance the mentee's future performance. Assessment refers to a related series of measures used to determine a complex

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attribute of an individual or group of individuals. This involves gathering and interpreting information about student level of attainment of learning goals. Good assessment can help students become more effective self-directed learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Educators believe that every measurement device should possess certain qualities. Perhaps the two most common technical concepts in measurement are reliability and validity (Weir 2005). Any kind of assessment, whether traditional or "authentic," must be developed in a way that gives the assessor accurate information about the performance of the individual (Weir 2005).

Evaluation is determining the value of something. So, more specifically, in the field of education, evaluation means measuring or observing the process to judge it or to determine it for its value by comparing it to others or some kind of a standard (Weir & Roberts, 1994). The focus of the evaluation is on grades. It is rather a final process that is determined to understand the quality of the process. Evaluation is comparing a student's achievement with other students or with a set of standards. The emphasis of evaluation is based upon broad personality change and the major objectives in the educational program. Thus, assessment is diagnostic in nature as it tends to identify areas of improvement and evaluation is judgmental, because it aims at providing an overall grade. The transition to a Letter Grading System (LGS) in Nepal was meant to modernize the educational evaluation environment. However, as Sharma (2017) and Kafle and Subedi (2021) point out, there is still a gap between policy and practice. While the research environment is specific to Surkhet, it mirrors larger national issues in implementing grading changes. There is an urgent need to improve stakeholders' knowledge of LGS, particularly in light of evaluation theories such as Realistic Evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Assessment

Assessment is any systematic method of obtaining evidence from posting question to draw inference about the knowledge, attitude, and other characteristics of people for a specific purpose. There are different uses of assessments: diagnostic, formative, needs, reaction, summative etc. (Shepherded and Godwin, 2004). Assessment is a general term that includes the full range of procedures used to gain information about learning and formation of values judgment concerning progress of students in relation to set standards. Assessment is the systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. Assessment is the act of judging or deciding the amount, value, quality or important of something, or the judgments or decision that is made. Assessment is the process of collecting enough data pertaining to a student learning to ascertain how the student is achieving determined standards. Assessment has two parts assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning may also refers to organized to activities to established a student knowledge or skill base in a given capacity (Wiles, 2013). Assessment is the method of obtaining evidence for made decision in intellectual evaluation.

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Grading System

Grade is a tool which measures the student achievement. There are different types of grade such as standard-based, norm-based, absolute and relative. Different types of standard-based grading with formative assessments lets students know where they need to improve (Marzano, 2010). A systematic testing component and a standardized grading system are essential parts of every assessment in a programs to measure learner's aptitude, proficiency, placement, diagnosis, progress, and achievement and provides feedback for the program evaluator, wash back information for teachers and students and motivational wash forward implication for all concerned. Z. Karim & J. Hossain also states the original purpose of grading was to improve student's greater learning and expansion of the mind; grades are more commonly now looked upon as a measure of student aptitude for outside sources and less for their self-improvement nature.

Grading is the process of a teacher arriving at and recording summarizing, symbolic remarks on the academic performance of his or her students. Grading should express neither approval nor disapproval of students as persons. The purpose of a grading system is to give the teacher a regular way to transmit to students, and to other persons who may be concerned with the intellectual development of students, value judgments made by the teacher. Letter grading system (LGS) is one of the modern and highly accepted evaluation system in the field of education. Theoretically, the functions of a grading system is to motivate students to work harder and perform better. It had been easily accepted and firmly practiced in developed countries for many decades. Which was valid and convenience in western countries to measure the educational and other varied capabilities of their children. Even though, the first instances of an attempt to evaluate students systematically appeared in the diary of Ezra Stiles, who was president of Yale University in the 18th century. In 1785, he divided students who were present for an examination into four ranks or grades: optima, second "*Optimi"*, "*Inferiors"* and "*Pejores"*. Latin terms indicating relative quality, "*Best*", "*Worse*" and "*Worst*" (Schneider & Hutt, 2014). Grading is relatively recent phenomena in education. In fact, prior to 1850, grading was virtually unknown in schools in the United States. It was significant because it helps us when and how the concept of LGS is originated and provides the idea of grading of student in different ways in different level of assessment system.

This letter grading system has been prepared by the CDC and passed by the NCDEC. LGS was implemented on 99 TSLC in 2071 and all SLC in 2072. In Nepal, the grading system is divided into following ways:

Letter Grading System in SEE

S.N.	*Interval in Percent*	*Grade*	*Description*	*Grade Point*
1	90 to 100	A+	Outstanding	4
2	80 to 90 Below	A	Excellent	3.6
3	70 to 80 Below	B+	Very Good	3.2
4	60 to 70 Below	B	Good	2.8
5	50 to 60 Below	C+	Satisfactory	2.4

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6	40 to 50 Below	C	Acceptable	2
7	30 to 35 Below	D+	Partially Acceptable	1.6
8	0 to 35 Below	NG	Not acceptable	00

(CDC Report, 2015)

Statement of the Problem

Majority of people have confusion on Letter Grading System and Marking System. How higher education institutions and other users of SLC certificates would be adapting these changes is not yet clear. The confusions expressed by different stakeholders through national media and are discussed at the implementation and general concern levels. There are several issues and confusions in the introduction of letter grading and its implications to the users of SLC certificates including students, higher secondary schools, training institutions, teacher training institutions, universities particularly faculty of education, and research centers. There are conceptual un-clarities in one hand and no deliberation on how changes could affect the user of SLC certificates in this guideline.

The confusions expressed by different stakeholders at the implementation and general concern levels. Several confusions are existing in the introduction of letter grading and its implications to the users of SLC certificates including students, parents, teachers, teacher trainers, educational institutions and governmental organizations. Regarding the conceptual un-clarities on how changes could influence the user of SLC certificates in the guideline. It is necessary to take proactive step to discuss on possible confusion and discuss the way out the measures to overcome them effectively. Recorded history describes that most of the students failed in SLC. Some students do not get school leaving certificate and eligible to higher study because of the failure in SLC examination. For the decrease of educational destroy to use Letter Grading System in SLC result. In LGS all students pass, which is true or not at all. There were so many obstacle and controversy related to LGS even though it is used in SLC result 2072. Then, my study is concern with the study of opinion of mathematics teachers and students towards LGS in SLC/SEE. Although study concern about the challenges and opportunities on LGS. This study was intended to answer the following research questions. What are the opinion of mathematics teachers and students towards LGS in SLC/SEE? What are the challenges and opportunities to the teachers and students on using LGS in SLC/SEE?

Purpose of the Study

To examine the perception of teacher and students towards Letter Grading System in the secondary level.

Research Questions

A research question is the fundamental core of a study. It focuses the study, determines the methodology, and guides all stages of inquiry, analysis and reporting. The questions attempted to achieve objectives of the study. So, to complete this study, the following were the research questions for the study:

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What is the perception of teachers toward Letter Grading System in the Secondary Level?

What is the perception of students toward Letter Grading System?

What challenges they faced?

What are the challenges of Letter Grading System to implementation?

Each study was not rigorous, prefect and free from limitations. Every study has its own boundary and limitation due to both time and cost. So, this study cannot remain escape from such phenomena. This study was conducted only in secondary level mathematics teachers and students (that passed SLC/SEE). This study was conducted only in Surkhet district. The study was delimited in the cluster of Birendranagar Municipality. Total Twelve schools as four schools from Twenty-Four public schools and eight schools from Forty-Six institutional schools were selected from which 25 mathematics teachers and 150 students were selected.

Review of Literature

Theoretical Literature

The theoretical literature review help establish what theories already exist, the relationships between them, to what degree the existing theories have been investigated, and to develop new statement to be explored.

Realistic Evaluation

Realistic evaluation is a form of theory-based evaluation developed by Pawson and Tilley (1997, 2006). They argue that whether interventions work depends on the underlying mechanisms at play in a specific context. The outcome = mechanism + context. Mechanisms describe what it is about the intervention that triggers change to occur. In a smoking cessation intervention, for example, mechanisms might include peer pressure to stop or to not stop, fear of health risks, and economic considerations. For realistic evaluators, the key evaluation questions are, what works? For whom? In what circumstances? In what respects and how? Realistic evaluators are less interested in the outcome-level question, did the intervention work at a macro level?

Realistic evaluation develops and then empirically tests the hypotheses about what outcomes are produced by what mechanisms in what contexts. The realistic approach tends to be more research-oriented, focusing on the underlying intervention theory and its behavioral assumptions at work, and the conditions supporting the intervention. The focus is on the most promising context-mechanism-outcome configurations (CMOCs), which show how interventions are meant to work in which populations and under what conditions. These can be viewed as mini-theories of change or links in an overall theory of change of an intervention. Each CMOC is, in effect, the subject of an evaluation and is tested against the available evidence.

Blamey and Mackenzie (2007, p. 444) describe how to undertake a realistic evaluation as

Step 1: The evaluator, through dialogue with program implementers, attempts to understand the nature of the program: What is the aim of our smoking cessation program? What is the nature of the target population at whom it is aimed? In what contexts and settings

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will it operate? What are the prevailing theories about why smoking cessation services will work for some people in some circumstances?

Step 2: The evaluator maps out a series of potential mini-theories that relate the various contexts of a program to the multiple mechanisms by which it might operate to produce different outcomes. For example, practitioner knowledge and the existing evidence might suggest that focusing the educational component of a midwife-led smoking cessation program on the potential negative effects on babies in utero will be most effective for pregnant women who have no children. However, young, non-pregnant female smokers may be less likely to respond to concerns about the threat of health effects on non-existent babies, but may be more likely to respond to anti-smoking interventions designed to appeal to their self-image.

Step 3: At this stage, the evaluator undertakes an outcome inquiry in relation to these mini-theories. This involves developing a quantitative and qualitative picture of the program in action. It might, for example, address how different types of smokers fare when it comes to breaking the habit following different types of cessation services delivered in a variety of ways. This picture includes an assessment of the extent to which different underlying psychological motivations and mechanisms have been triggered in particular smokers by specific services.

Step 4: By exploring how CMOCs play out within a program, the evaluator refines and develops tentative theories of what works for whom in what circumstances.

A key strength of the realistic approach is its focus on context. Context must be part of the evaluation framework, and specific contexts, whether within or outside the control of the intervention, can enhance or detract from how well the intervention works.

Pedagogical Alternatives in Schooling

In justifying and defending contemporary educational policy: educationists have drawn significantly two key theoretical influences: Progressivism with John Dewey and Critical Pedagogy with Paulo Freire who wrote a book named 'We make the road by walking' and 'Pedagogy for Liberation' (Upadhyay, 2067). Paulo Freire is the most influential man who brought the concept of the alternative school, alternative assessment and alternative pedagogy through his groundbreaking treatise "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" in 1968. It was the fundamental book which allowed educationists to think about the alternative way of teaching and learning, alternative system of education and alternative system of assessment. Similarly Ivan Illich's "Deschooling Society (1971)" also brought the revolution in education system by challenging the existing education system of that time.

Another most recognized educationist who brought out the concept of alternative education system is Everett Reimer who published the important treatise named as "*The School is Dead*" in 1971.These thinkers have presented the concept of alternative education and alternative evaluation system. So there has been arising the alternative assessment system (Paneru, 2016). Now for the evaluation of student intellectual performance used Letter Grading System (LGS) practiced all over the world. Nepal also published SLC result 2072 in LGS.

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Empirical Literature Review

An empirical literature review, also known as a systematic literature review, analyzes previous empirical studies in order to provide an answer to a specific research topic. Rather than drawing information from theories or beliefs, empirical research relies on observations and measurements to arrive at conclusions. In this study, the researcher reviewed the following empirical reviews as below: -

According to CERID (2002), the former assessment system had several barriers; students did not improve through assignments on single topics or subjects. Similarly, there was no possible means to upgrade the learner's credentials. In reality, several issues in the conventional grading method made obtaining high grades difficult. For example, genius learners barely scored first division on the examined numeration system of written assessments. Nevertheless, learners are praised based on their high scores/grades in the exam.

According to Simon et al. (2010) there was a deviation in grading whether it should be the norm-referenced or criterion-referenced, which clearly states the criteria for student learning. However, high schools traditionally use norm-referenced grades to satisfy the requirement to rate students for university applications.

Diana Marie (2011) stated that grading is one of an evaluator's greatest problems and most significant professional obligations. Despite the significance of this activity, teachers accept no official training in grading techniques and the efficiency of several grading approaches. Similarly, due to the shortsightedness and awareness about successful grading techniques, teachers prefer to choose designs that have more experience than students on the sprite and rationality of the LGS. As Diana Marie observes, most teachers perform what was done to them. It is stated that implementing a letter grading system in the assessment will increase teachers' responsibility. The teacher must get training to be used in the classroom to achieve better results. Thus, by utilizing LGS with empathy, attitudes, teachers' experiences, and students' performance may be enhanced and monitored..

The transition to a Letter Grading System (LGS) in Nepal was meant to modernize the educational evaluation environment. However, as Sharma (2017) and Kafle and Subedi (2021) point out, there is still a gap between policy and practice. While the research environment is specific to Surkhet, it mirrors larger national issues in implementing grading changes. There is an urgent need to improve stakeholders' knowledge of LGS, particularly in light of evaluation theories such as Realistic Evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Methodology

This study used a quantitative questionnaire methodology complemented by qualitative interviews to investigate the attitudes of secondary-level mathematics teachers and SEE-passed students about the Letter Grading System (LGS) in Surkhet, Nepal. The population includes all of the district's secondary schools, with 12 chosen at random. The sample included 25 math teachers and 150 pupils. Data were obtained using a structured opinionnaire with a five-point Likert scale (43 items for instructors and 38 for students), as well as semi-structured interviews with 5 students and 3 teachers. The opinionnaire assessed LGS comprehension, practice,

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assessment, and effectiveness. Expert assessment and adaption from previous research confirmed the validity and reliability of the instruments.

Result and Discussion

Data analysis is the process of uncovering patterns and trends in the data. The interpretation of analyzed data was done using different theoretical perspectives as explained in the theoretical framework of the study. This chapter deals with the statistical analysis and interpretation of the data. In order to analyze and interpret the collect data by $\chi\ 2 - test$ were use 0.05 level of significance with $(n - 1)$ degree of freedom and weighted mean in each statement. The purpose of this study was to analyze the opinions of secondary level mathematics teachers and students towards letter grading system, effectiveness, challenges and opportunities of using LGS.

Statement 1: Students, parents and teachers are aware and understanding Policy of LGS.

As illustrated in Table-1, the $\chi\ 2 - value$ of statement 4 was 5.240 at 0.05 level and was statistically insignificant according to chi square test. The weighted mean was 2.68. It shows that a substantial increase in a disagree categories, a slight decrease in neutral, agree and strongly disagree categories and zero in strongly agree category. The results indicated that only 24% teachers were agreed and 48% teachers were disagreed with this statement, thus students, parents and teachers were not aware and understanding policy of LGS.

Statement 2: LGS is an important criteria for judging students' progress.

As illustrated in Table-1, the $\chi\ 2 - value$ of statement 5 was 12.400 at 0.05 level and was statistically significant according to chi square test. The weighted mean was 3.12. It shows a substantial increase in agree category, a slight decrease in disagree, neutral, strongly agree and strongly disagree categories. The result indicated that 44% teachers were agreed with this statement, thus LGS is an important criteria for judging students' progress.

Statement 3: LGS has a positive effect in student's academic achievement.

As illustrated in Table-1, the $\chi\ 2 - value$ of statement 6 was 3.640 at 0.05 level and was statistically insignificant according to chi square test. The weighted mean was 2.88. It shows a substantial shift from the neutral category and equal in agreed and disagreed percentage, thus LGS has neither positive nor negative effect in student's academic achievements.

Statement 4: High grades can motivate student to learn.

As illustrated in Table-1, the $\chi\ 2 - value$ of statement 7 was 12.667 at 0.05 level and was statistically significant according to chi square test. The weighted mean was 3.52>3.15. The figure 8 shows a substantial shift from agree category, a highly decrease in neutral category and disagree and strongly agree categories is equal and slight decrease in strongly disagree category. The result indicated that 60% teachers were agreed with this statement, thus high grades can motivate student to learn.

Statement 5: I would like to learn more about letter grading system.

As illustrated in Table 4.1, the $\chi\ 2 - value$ of statement 15 was 17.360 at 0.05 level and it was statistically significant according to chi square test. The weighted mean was

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34.12>3.15. It shows a substantial shift from agree category, a highly decrease in strongly agree and neutral categories and zero in disagree and strongly disagree categories. The result indicated that 92% teachers were agreed with this statement; thus all were like to learn more about letter grading system.

There were mathematics teachers of secondary levels from selected from schools who involved to response in my questionnaire statements. The teachers responded about what mathematics teachers practice in LGS was shown in appendix-C and the χ 2 − $value$ at 0.05 level of significance and weighted mean show in the table below as

Table No.: 1

Secondary level mathematics teachers' response about practice of LGS

S.N	Opinionnaire Statement	χ 2 − $value$	Decision	Weighted Mean
1	LGS is firstly used in the evaluation of TSLC 2071 and all SLC 2072 result.	42.5	S	3.59
2	LGS is usefulness for evaluation in existing school curriculum.	50.1	S	3.50
3	LGS is usefulness for evaluation in existing school curriculum.	67.7	S	3.76
4	Sufficient curriculum will be change for using LGS in school level.	22.4	S	3.18
5	Orientation programs are not sufficient for understanding LGS & GPA.	33.2	S	3.37
6	Training is sufficient for teacher and stakeholders about understanding GPA and LGS.	14.5	S	2.97
7	I believe grades should reflect the influence of a student's behavior and work ethic on his or her achievement.	43.1	S	3.49
8	Now schoolwork is used only for feedback, practice and not for a final grades student's neglects important practice.	37.4	S	3.15
9	LGS is practice in internal evaluation of student achievement.	41.9	S	3.64
10	Practice work is not including in the end of our grading.	51.3	S	3.59

There were twelve mathematics teachers of secondary levels from selected twelve schools who involved to response in my opinionnaire statements. The teachers responded about what mathematics teachers' response about evaluation in LGS was shown in appendix-C and the χ 2 − $value$ at 0.05 level of significance and weighted mean show in the table below as

Table No.: 2

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Secondary level mathematics teachers' response on evaluation in LGS

S.N	Opinionnaire Statement	χ 2 − *value*	Decision	Weighted Mean
1	The numerical/percentage grading system is used before use of LGS for student achievement evaluation.	33.4	S	2.95
2	LGS is appropriate for evaluation of SLC Examination.	38.8	S	3.65
3	LGS is same with Numerical/Percentage grading system.	38.6	S	2.35
4	LGS is very different from Numerical/Percentage system.	43.1	S	3.55
5	LGS is using in internal evaluation.	61.2	S	3.52
6	CAS is similar to LGS in student intellectual evaluation.	12.1	S	3.01
7	No students fail in LGS in evaluation.	77.7	S	3.91
8	Give opportunity to re-test for increasing grade, who get low grade.	17.2	S	2.52
9	Re test is not true for increasing grade.	25.1	S	3.47
10	No students fail in LGS, which is true at all.	38.8	S	2.55

There were twelve mathematics teachers of secondary levels from selected twelve schools who involved to response in my opinionnaire statements. The teachers responded about what mathematics teachers' response on effectiveness of LGS and the χ 2 − *value* at 0.05 level of significance and weighted mean show in the table below as

Opinion of Student's on LGS

There were one hundred fifty students select from sampled school. They were give response in my opinionnaire statements. The student's response was shown in Appendix-E and the χ 2 − *value* at 0.05 level of significance and weight mean of students' response on their understanding about LGS was shown in the table-2.

The student's response was shown in Appendix-E and the χ 2 − *value* at 0.05 level of significance and weight mean of students' response on practice of LGS was shown in the table below

Table No.: 3

Opinion of secondary level students on what they understand about LGS

S.N	Opinionnaire Statement	χ 2 − *value*	Decision	Weighted Mean
1	LGS is firstly used in the evaluation of TSLC 2071 & all SLC 2072 result.	50.1	S	3.50
2	LGS is usefulness for evaluation in existing school curriculum.	67.7	S	3.76

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3	Sufficient curriculum will be change for using LGS in school level.	22.4	S	3.18
4	LGS is practice in internal evaluation of student achievement.	33.3	S	3.37
5	Orientation programs are not sufficient for understanding LGS & GPA.	14.5	S	2.97
6	Training is sufficient for teacher and stakeholders about understanding GPA and LGS.	43.1	S	3.49
7	Now schoolwork is used only for feedback, practice and not for a final grades student's neglects important practice.	37.4	S	3.15
8	Practice work is not including in the end of our grading.	41.9	S	3.64

The student's response was shown in Appendix-E and the $\chi\ 2 - value$ at 0.05 level of significance and weight mean of students' response on evaluation in LGS was shown in the table below

Table No.: 4

Opinion of secondary level students on evaluation in LGS

S.N	Opinionnaire Statement	$\chi\ 2 - value$	Decision	Weighted Mean
1	The numerical/percentage grading system is used before use of LGS for student achievement evaluation.	51.3	S	3.59
2	LGS is appropriate for evaluation of SLC Examination.	33.4	S	2.95
3	LGS is same with Numerical/Percentage grading system.	38.7	S	3.65
4	LGS is very different from Numerical/Percentage system	38.6	S	3.35
5	LGS is using in internal evaluation.	43.1	S	3.55
6	LGS is also need in internal evaluation.	61.2	S	3.52
7	I believe grades should reflect the influence of a student's behavior and work ethic on his or her achievement.	12.1	S	3.01
8	No students fail in LGS in student evaluation.	77.7	S	3.91
9	No students fail in LGS, which is true at all.	17.2	S	2.52
10	Give opportunity to re-test for increasing grade, who get low grade.	25.1	S	3.47
11	Re test is not true for increasing grade.	53.6	S	3.22

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The student's response was shown in Appendix-E and the $\chi 2 - value$ at 0.05 level of significance and weight mean of students' response on effectiveness of LGS was shown in the table below as

Table No.: 5

Opinion of secondary level students on effectiveness of LGS

S.N	Opinionnaire Statement	$\chi 2 - value$	Decision	Weighted Mean
1	Student motivation is increase after using LGS in SEE.	38.9	S	3.30
2	Teachers, students and parents are satisfied to using LGS in SEE.	47.9	S	3.43
3	Continuity in study is increase after using LGS in SEE.	18.6	S	2.98
4	Responsibility and duty in reading and writing is increase in student after using LGS in SEE.	47.3	S	3.30
5	Student performance is increase while using LGS in student evaluation in SEE.	55.9	S	3.69
6	I feel student motivate to study out of school to aid my learning when it is not before using LGS.	53.1	S	3.65
7	I feel better understanding of my learning when LGS is used in SLC.	12.1	S	3.01
8	I feel more motivated to learn when I understand the expected learning objectives.	77.7	S	3.91
9	Letter grades are an effective method of informing parents of their child progress and achievement.	17.2	S	2.52

For the purpose of gaining personal perception/views/opinion about LGS, the researcher was conducted an interview. Researcher select 5 students and 3 teachers purposively, objectively form sample for the interview. The interview was conduct based on semi-structured interview guidelines of Appendix-H for SLC 2072 Passed student, Appendix-I for SEE passed students and Appendix-J for secondary level mathematics teachers. This interview focused the opinion towards LGS, faced problem and explore the challenge and opportunities on LGS.

Interview with teachers

For the purpose of gaining personal information, beliefs, views, and opinions about LGS the researcher conduct an interview. The researcher selects three teachers for the interview. The interview was conducted based on interview guidelines. This interview focuses the teacher's perception, views, thoughts, and opinions towards LGS.

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Interview with teacher A: Teacher A was a secondary level mathematics teacher. He was 53 years old and 30 years secondary level mathematics subject teaching experience. His qualification was B.Ed. in mathematics education. He said that, "*Letter Grading System is a grading system in letter of student achievement. We are not clear about LGS and its policies but I understand about LGS and GPA. Training and orientation programs were not sufficient for understanding LGS. LGS is not clear student achievement score. Parents and students were generally misunderstanding about LGS evaluation system and regular and continuity in study was decrease. Achievement was not exact and it is in interval. In the present context LGS was used in SEE evaluation. All were passed in LGS but not anywhere. It is most important fact was no students drop out in school and week students also get level clear certificate but not excellent in talented student. Even though, if all were understood about LGS it is best system in student achievement evaluation*".

He was 30 years experienced teacher in secondary level mathematics subject. He said, we were not clear about LGS and GPA. LGS not shows students actual intelligence. It's most important fact was no students drop out in school and week students also gets level clear certificate but not excellent in talented student. Even though, if all were understood about LGS it is best system in student achievement evaluation. Thus he was positive opinion towards LGS.

Interview with teacher B: Teacher B was a secondary level mathematics teacher. She was 29 years old and 5 years secondary level mathematics subject teaching experience. Her qualification was M.Ed. in mathematics education. She said that, "*Letter Grading System is a system of grading in a symbolic interval for student intellectual achievement. I understand about LGS and GPA and I also calculate GPA and LGS. But some teacher and stakeholder were not understood and they do not aware about LGS. Now the mathematics teacher are need learn and teach about calculating GPA and assign LGS. Training and orientation programs were not sufficient for understanding LGS and its policies. It is also need in internal evaluation. Responsibility, duty, continuity in study, studying habit and interest were decrease from them understands about LGS. All stakeholders and teachers need understand in time and aware in the student and parents about LGS. All were thinking no student fail in LGS but who is capable and incapable for the further specific study his or her achievement grade are decided. Educate persons and parents were satisfied with LGS but not all. So many problems were faced who get low grade. The student's gets opportunity for the further study in their choices and talented field. It was not before using LGS because of their frailer in some subject. Therefore LGS is useful for using SEE*".

She was a teacher of secondary level mathematics subject. She was understands and also calculate LGS and GPA. She said it is also need in internal evaluation. Responsibility, duty, continuity in study, studying habit and interest were decreased from the misunderstanding

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about LGS. LGS is useful for using SLC evaluation. Thus, she had positive opinion towards LGS.

Findings

This research was concerned about the opinion of secondary level mathematics teachers and students towards LGS and to explore the challenges and opportunities to the teachers and students on LGS. This study was survey research. The population of the study was consisted of all secondary level mathematics teachers and students that passed SEE in LGS of Surkhet district. The researcher selected 12 schools randomly. 25 mathematics teachers and 150 students from the selected schools constituted the sample of the study from Surkhet district.

A set of structured opinionnaire was developed as a tool for collect data for the study. All opinionnaire statements were related to LGS in SEE. The opinionnaire statements were classified into: understanding, practice, evaluation, and effectiveness. There were 43 opinionnaire statements for sampled secondary level mathematics teachers and 38 statements for sampled students.

The $\chi\ 2\ -\ test$ at 0.05 level of significance was used to find out the opinion of mathematics teachers and students towards LGS in SLC/SEE. Among the total 43 opinionnaire statements, the mathematics teachers responded 24 statements were significant and 19 were insignificant from $\chi\ 2\ -\ test$.The average weighted mean was 3.15 and 21 statements out of 43 were above the average weighted mean. Similarly the figure 1-43 shows that 26 statements were decreased from agree category, 4 statements were neither agree nor disagree and 13 statements were decried from disagree category. And among the 38 opinionnaire statements, the students responded all statements are significant from the$\chi\ 2\ -\ test$. The average weighted mean was 3.35 and 21 statements out of 38 were above the average weighted mean. Similarly 31 statements out of 38 were decreased from agree category and 7 statements were decreased from disagree category. It shows that the secondary level mathematics teachers and students are positive opinion towards LGS in SEE.

Similarly primary data was collect from interview. Interview was conducted in 5-SLC/SEE passed students and 3-secondary level mathematics teachers with the help of interview guideline kept in Appendix-H, Appendix-I and Appendix-J. The interview get personal thoughts, opinion, views and beliefs about LGS and it helps to explore the challenges and opportunity on LGS in SLC/SEE and to make a theme. From the above collected data analysis the findings were as follows:

There was a positive opinion of secondary level mathematics teachers and students towards LGS in SEE. Secondary level mathematics teachers were understood and calculate and assigned accurately GPA and LGS. Training and orientation programs were not sufficient for understanding GPA and LGS. There was necessary of training, orientation programs to the teachers, parents and students to understand about LGS. LGS was not useful for existing curriculum; therefore sufficient curriculum will be change for using LGS. LGS was not used in internal evaluation and LGS was also need in internal evaluation.

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Letter Grading System was different from numerical/percentage grading system. No students was fail in LGS, which is not true at all. Give opportunity to re-test for increasing grade, who get low grade. Student motivation, regularity and continuity in study were decreased after using LGS in SEE. Difficult to the stakeholders for understand the concept of LGS and further impact. Challenge to understand for student, teacher and parents about GPA and LGS. Challenge to motivation of students and teacher in teaching learning activity. Most of the Students, teachers and parents have misconceptions, misunderstanding and illusions about LGS due to the lack of knowledge and clear understanding about LGS. Parents, teachers and students were not generally satisfied to using LGS, because of misunderstanding about LGS. They support the idea of an implementation of LGS in SEE and they would like to learn more about it.

Discussion

This study investigated the opinions of secondary level mathematics teachers and SEE-passed students in Surkhet district regarding the Letter Grading System (LGS), is includes the accompanying problems and possibilities. The findings show that both instructors and students have good opinions of LGS, albeit considerable gaps in comprehension and implementation persist.

The opinionnaire results suggested that the majority of mathematics instructors and pupils supported the LGS. Specifically, 24 of the 43 statements for instructors and all 38 for students were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, indicating broad interest and worry about LGS-related issues. This is consistent with other research by Sharma (2017) and Poudel (2019), who also found widespread support for LGS, particularly for its perceived capacity to lower student failure rates and exam-related stress.

However, the average weighted mean scores—3.15 for instructors and 3.35 for students—show that the level of agreement was moderate, rather than extraordinarily significant. Furthermore, the distribution of comments into agree, neutral, and disagree categories indicates underlying perplexity and doubt regarding many aspects of LGS. This conclusion confirms Kafle and Subedi's (2021) view that, while the LGS was created to update evaluation processes, its conceptual clarity among stakeholders remains restricted..

Understanding and Implementation Challenges

The interviews with instructors and students revealed considerable knowledge gaps in the Grade Point Average (GPA) and LGS frameworks. Respondents stated that training and orientation sessions for teachers, students, and parents were insufficient. This conclusion is congruent with Rana's (2020) research, which indicated that many Nepali teachers lacked proper professional development in assessment reforms, particularly LGS.

Teachers were particularly concerned about the application of LGS to the present curriculum, claiming that the current content and structure are incompatible with the standards-based evaluation method needed by LGS. This reflects Bhattarai's (2018) criticism of the mismatch of curricular goals and evaluation practices in Nepalese schools.

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Furthermore, the LGS was seen to be used inconsistently in internal assessments, undermining its credibility and dependability. Upadhyay & Acharya (2020) suggest that irregularities in academic grading might lead to mistrust among students and parents, as well as feelings of prejudice or injustice.

Opportunities and Unintended Consequences

Nonetheless, several unforeseen repercussions were identified. Both teachers and students observed a decrease in student motivation, regularity, and continuity of study following the implementation of LGS. This might be due to the assumption that "no one fails," which leads to complacency—a criticism repeated by Yadav and Regmi (2021). Some students with great performance in certain areas but low performance in others suffered with composite GPA outcomes, compromising their admittance to desired further education streams or occupational jobs like the military or police force.

Furthermore, stakeholders, including parents, expressed considerable misunderstandings and uncertainty about how the grading system works and how it affects student performance. These beliefs are indicative of a larger communication deficit, as observed by Adhikari (2022), who underlined the importance of increased information transmission and community participation in educational reform efforts. While both teachers and students express support for LGS, qualitative data reveal critical gaps in understanding. These findings echo Rana (2020), who emphasized the lack of adequate professional development in LGS implementation. The mismatch between curriculum content and grading practices, as noted by Bhattarai (2018), further complicates implementation.

Teachers reported that the internal use of LGS remains inconsistent, undermining credibility. This concern aligns with Upadhyay & Acharya (2020), who caution against irregular grading practices. Furthermore, the belief that "no one fails" under LGS has inadvertently reduced motivation among students (Yadav & Regmi, 2021).

Conclusion

On the basis of findings of this study shows that there was a positive opinion of secondary level mathematics teachers and students towards LGS in SEE. Even though teachers, parents and students were generally not satisfied with LGS because most of the students, teachers and parents have misconceptions, misunderstanding and illusions about LGS due to the lack of knowledge and clear understanding about LGS. Therefore there is necessary to training, orientation programs to the teachers, parents and students to understand about GPA and LGS. Challenge to understand for students, teachers and parents about GPA and LGS. Student's dropout rate was decrease in school and week students were also get level clear certificate. Some students failed in some subject and excellent other subject, LGS provides them an opportunity to higher study.

Implication

The study was delimited in the area of Birendranagar Surkhet. The result of the study will be beneficial to correct the failure mechanism of schools and to reform schools. The findings will be implications for systematic mechanism support teachers during

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implementation of mathematics curriculum. The research has indicated that the opportunities and possibilities of expanding pedagogical thoughtfulness in mathematics classroom teaching-learning practices. The study should be a strong pedagogical strategy for some school mathematics teachers as well as for learners.

The study will be fruitful for government school and institutional schools' stakeholders for awareness and improvement suggestions. The evidence and experiences of research theme is some thoughtful changes in students, teachers and school leaders have fueled us to expand the researches. A huge pedagogical changes will be bring from the theme of this research findings.

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