Perceptions of Teachers Concerning the New Grading System at Secondary Level School: A Qualitative Approach

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Abstract: This paper presents the teachers' perceptions of the Letter Grading System (LGS) at secondary-level schools in the Tarakeshwor Municipality of Kathmandu district. The main objective is to study teachers' perceptions of LGS and identify how to address its foremost challenges. This research is based on phenomenological design and prefers citizen constructivism. Data is collected using decisive sampling methods and a semi-structured interview tool. The teachers' practices with the LGS are significant, appropriate, motivated, and suitable for stimulating the Nepali education system. Similarly, undergraduates' and their parents' perceptions are simply ensuing generous promotion strategy with advancement to their child without difficulties. As a result, there is a mismatch between the evaluation technique's practices and teachers' perceptions of the LGS for tracking students' progress. Furthermore, as discussed in this article, the LGS has assessed the student's proficiency and rational domain using nine reformist scales based on the performance opportunity provided. Finally, an experienced teacher believes that LGS has biased, liable, productive, and merit-based assessment tools in education without incorporating non-standardised tests into the school assessment system. Currently, LGS has a far better assessment method in the school appraisal system if it is possible to integrate non-testing devices, such as project work, classroom assignments, homework, group work, practical work, etc., as an assignment.

Keywords: Challenges, Evaluation Literacy, Letter Grading, Teachers' Perception, Teachers

1. Introduction

The letter grading system (LGS) is one of the most current and widely used evaluation systems in education [1]. A grading system's theoretical function motivates students to work harder and perform better [2]. Most developed countries have widely acknowledged and practiced LGS in recent decades. Therefore, it was valid and convenient in western countries to assess their children's education and other abilities.

Despite this, the first instances of a systematic effort to appraise students were performed in the account of Ezra Stiles, the president of Yale University, in the 18th century. Further, he categorised learners into four levels: optimi, inferiors, and pejores - Latin terms specifying comparative eminence, best, worse, and the worst in 1785 [3]. In the field of education, grading is a relatively new phenomenon.

Grading was practically unknown in American institutes before 1850 [4]. Nevertheless, we need to deliver when and how the perception of LGS came from and the notion of grading students in several ways and stages of the evaluation literacy.

Likewise, various studies show that the United States first implemented letter grades by the end of the 19th century. Colleges and high schools replaced other assessment forms with letters and percentage grades [3]. Though grading systems in the United States seem to be significantly standardised, arguments about grade increases and the value of evaluations in nurturing students' learning endures.

In the context of Nepal, until 2016, various numerical marking evaluation systems existed to assess learners' achievements in all types of exams. The evaluation system was rigorously formal and structured. The primary goal of the evaluation literacy was to connect students' achievement levels with various stakeholders [5]. LGS was focused from

the top down through their local organisations to adhere to the rules and regulations they had established regarding the evaluation system. There was no flexibility or individual handling policies without a specific location and time frame. There were numerous impediments, no provision for students to be upgraded through assignments on single or varying issues, and no promising ways to upgrade their qualifications.

Furthermore, numerous issues in the earlier evaluation system made achieving high marks difficult. For example, genius students have barely gotten first divisions and scrutinised written assignments numeration system [5]. The values were given to the undergraduates by securing top scores and then bringing scores seen in the mark sheets; however, they were not required and judged over their intrinsic creative and constructive activities. Students who received a top score in the exam are recognised. One frequently recognised problem in previous evaluations is subjective and influenced by the teacher's biases [6, 7]. Likewise, students can be biased when a different individual grade or score sections of learners work differently despite using similar evaluation norms [8, 9]. Considering these weaknesses mentioned above in the traditional evaluation system of Nepal, the Ministry of Education (MoE) implemented a letter grading system in the SEE evaluation system as a reformatory way of the old one as far as possible [5].

After extensive discussion, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Office of Examination Controller (OEC) concluded that they had made rigorous efforts to implement the LGS in SEE of Nepal since 2015 [5] and proceed to other classes with the hope of students progressing based on excellence. As a result, different levels of students of the same type can be separated based on their level of competency. This paper explores the influence of a soft grading scale versus a strict grading scale on learners' success, where the story of "average" mastery in the letter category (the grade of 'D') coincides through the Secondary Education Examination's (SEE's) minimum passing requirement.

In this respect, some academicians argue that it assesses learners' abilities based on hierarchical categories. "According to Wagle, "the new School Leaving Certificate (SLC) grading system better reflects students' capability" [10]. In subject-wise analysis, students' levels are classified based on different point score averages and analysed as a Grade Point Average (GPA) for the entire subject. The main concern is that the students are not 'failed'. There is no provision for grade 'E', but one is for categorising inadequate performance [10]. If a student obtains a grade of less than 'D+' and cannot score a minimum of 1.6 GPA in at least one subject, they are ineligible to register in grade XI.

Since the consistency with several categorical potentials of standardisation is readily accepted, it is applied in developed countries to literate the guardians. They can provide a valuable guide to their children at home about the policies and practices of the LGS. Learners are prominent for providing grades, which provide constructive inspiration to learn. In the grading system, it could be classified based on

categorical scales ranging from very poor to outstanding. In contrast to developing countries like Nepal, the operational method is similar, but the persistent approach of stakeholders is perceived differently as unidentified. It is still being applied in Nepal to serve donors' interests and policies through the World Bank and other brands of various donors, such as JAICA, UNDP, and UNICEF, that support economic funding to enhance SEE results [11].

They have allocated Nepal's fiscal year budget through several education initiatives and commissions. Unfortunately, despite the Nepalese government's increasing expenditure on school education, learners' performance is not being improved. However, the number of SEE students who have been approved has grown dramatically over recent years. As a result, the passing rate of students with low grades, typically below 'C+', has increased. Consequently, we indicated that the number of quality learners or higher grading students is not progressive and that LGS in Nepal creates only low grading and less trained persons. Therefore, the primary objective of this paper is to explore and analyse the teacher's perspectives on the LGS and its current issues.

2. Literature Review

This section supports a framework for the study by evaluating relevant literature and theories. The unit is structured around teachers' observations of grading systems and their challenges. Teachers' perceptions refer to many teachers' perspectives on grading and grading systems and the challenges that arise from them. Perceptions include experiences, thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes ranging from awareness and appreciation to more profound implications, and they can be categorised by having monetary and emotional value. Since opinions are more abstract than practices, hence are extra challenging to encompass in this article.

On the other hand, this study explains why these viewpoints are crucial for comprehending grading systems and concerns. In higher education institutions, grades are highly predictive of educational performance [12]. Therefore, extensive research is carried out, and several journals, e-resources, electronic databases, and books and book sites of literature are studied to fulfill the objective of this research study.

According to CERID, 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 [13]. In addition, 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.

One of the most commonly cited concerns in traditional evaluation is instructor prejudice might be biased and influenced by examiners [8, 14]. Likewise, learners might be prejudiced when various individuals score samples of their

work differently, although using similar evaluation principles [8, 9, 14]. Therefore, LGS benefits the assessment system instead of enhancing inspiration and producing accountability. According to Reddy, a grading system in education is a system that familiarises and assesses the student's educational achievement only on points [15]. Furthermore, she demonstrates seven grading methods: "rating percentage from 0-100 percent; letter grading and variations from 'A' grade to 'F' grade standard-referenced grading-typically comparing students with letter grades. Furthermore, standards grading (or Absolute-Standards grading) compares student performance to a pre-determined typical level of performance, and narrative grading-writing remarks on learner" [15].

According to Reddy, LGS leads to improved perceptions engagement, makes classwork simpler, gives academics a visible strategy about their strengths and weaknesses, grading pattern description, and removes stress from researchers at specific points. On the other hand, the grading system has limitations such as the absence of motivation, a poor scoring method, inaccuracy in measuring students' performance and knowledge, and a failure to motivate students for competition. Despite this, the LGS is a suitable evaluation system since it is related to testing students' ability, makes it easier to categorise, and points to the subsequent study with positive success on the GPA principle.

Diana Marie and Guskey stated that "Grading is one of an evaluator's greatest problems and most significant professional obligations" [16, 17]. Despite the significance of this activity, teachers accept no official training in grading techniques and the efficiency of several grading approaches [18]. 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 [18]. As Diana Marie observes, "most teachers perform what was done to them" [17]. It is stated that implementing a letter grading system in the assessment will increase teachers' responsibility. The teacher must train to be used in the classroom to achieve better results. Thus, utilising LGS with empathy, attitudes, teachers' experiences, and students' performance may be enhanced and monitored.

The LGS was exclaimed by Guskey and Link because "teachers differed greatly across grade levels in how greatly they highlight success and non-success "process" variables" [19]. Secondary-level teachers emphasise attainment criteria [20]. It has been established that the weight of secondary-level students may be evaluated based on the inflation or deflation of scores identified via teaching-learning activities in the classroom and teachers' encouraging actions.

According to Simon et al., there was a deviation in grading whether it should be norm-referenced or criterion-referenced, clearly stating the criteria for student learning [21]. However, high schools traditionally use norm-referenced grades to satisfy the requirement to rate students for university applications [22]. Likewise, Brookhart et al. described a potential error of roughly five on a 100-point scale. As a result, Starch proposed a 9-point scale (i.e., 'A+', 'A-', 'B+',

'B-', 'C+', 'C-', 'D+', 'D-', and 'F'), then further verified the progress in consistency achieved by switching to a 5-point scale based on the normal distribution [23, 24]. Their research led to the early 20th-century shift away from a 100-point scale. As a result, the ABCDF letter grade system grew increasingly worldwide and is currently used in schools in the United States. Similarly, nine-category letter grade scales such as 'A+', 'A', 'B+', 'B', 'C+', 'C', 'D+', 'D', & 'E' were used for student evaluation in Nepal in 2016. In this grading system, 'A+' is considered outstanding, whereas 'D' is deemed insufficient and 'E' is extremely inadequate [25].

According to Cox, teachers differ in their use of LGS procedures, particularly general evaluations, minimum grading rules, accepting effort late with no punishment, and enabling students to retake and substitute unsatisfactory ratings with retest marks [26]. This evidence is primarily found in the educational system of Nepal. Teachers consider grades to evaluate students based on what they can accomplish for specific learners. Instead of depending merely on a grading system, many teachers utilise their compassion for typical students' situations, teaching practice, and feelings of honesty, dependability, correctness, and fairness to make proficient decisions.

In this way, grading approaches may change within a single classroom, just as they concern teachers. These are a vital component of accurate, unbiased grading by a few teachers rather than a problem. However, Simon et al. revealed that standardised grading standards regularly clashed with an expert decision and substantially impacted students' ultimate grades; hence it indicates the influence of policy in that state, which is a significant contextual impact [22]. Therefore, some academics have created measures to consider teachers' ideas and approaches toward grading, with items based on the grading's prominence, effectiveness, effort, ability, rating behaviours, and perceived competence. These studies confirmed the survey and discussion findings of teachers' attitudes toward employing cognitive and non-cognitive variables in grading [22, 27].

2.1. Concern About Conventional Grading Practices

Most research shows that teachers can provide several descriptions for why a learner received the grade apart from topic understanding or achievement on a learning criterion. However, there are some examples of complications. For instance, the teachers correct students for missing tasks and students who attempt to increase their grades by adding extra points to the complete learning project. As a result of their performance, teachers try to modify the classroom environment through grades by learners. Using the typical 100-point grading system, teachers frequently inflate or deflate scores by awarding points for non-pedagogical extra credit opportunities, tasks, or performance.

2.2. Perceptions of Teachers on Grading and Its Challenges

As Brookhart et al. stated in their study, efficient research on teachers' grading challenges and opinions circulated in the

1980s [22]. They were further explained in Brookhart's review of 19 pragmatic studies of teachers' grading practices, issues, views, and opinions. He kept five themes based on the research [28]. First, teachers employ measures of achievement, primarily examinations. Second, teachers think it is critical to grade somewhat using numerous sources of information, sharing efforts, and making it evident to students that what is measured and how they would be judged were all views of impartiality.

Secondly, teachers in advocate's school view school success to encompass the work children perform in class, not simply the result. Third, secondary teachers included perceptual elements into grades, such as ability, effort, enhancement, task completion, and to a minor extent, student's other performances. Fourth, grading systems are not consistent between teachers in terms of diligence or the amount to which emotional aspects are taken into account, reflecting variances in teachers' views and ideas.

Brookhart's review discovered an increased curiosity in exploring grading difficulties during this period when performance-based and mixed classroom value was highlighted and worries about the trustworthiness of teacher's independent result of student work [28]. The conclusions backed up officials' rising doubt about teachers' perspectives on student success.

2.3. Teacher Perceptions of the Letter Grading System

Compared to the number of studies on teachers' grading performance, there are limited studies on specific sensory activity constructs such as value, connotation, importance, beliefs, and attitudes. Therefore, this section focuses on each explanation of the idea (what grading entails) and the implications and significance of grading (how it affects students). Academicians employed this theoretical framework to investigate teachers' remarks on their grading and the extent to which values and consequences were considered [29].

The findings revealed that the teachers saw rational grades as a reward for completed work, encouraged each student's strength and excellence, student attitude toward achievement as represented by exercise accomplishment, and student progress in learning. Teachers stated that they want disposition and faithfulness, not just achievement, the oral communication that marks are economical if they're down for lack of effort or involvement. That grading must be harsh for great achievers. Teachers also considered the impact of grading decisions on students' imminent achievement and perceptions of competency. Personal integrity may be a subject in numerous studies of the perceptions of the teacher toward grading systems [22].

2.4. Letter Grading System as a Communication Tool for Stakeholders

According to Swan, Guskey, and Jung, "teacher, students, and parents choose LGS over traditional report cards (grading percentage)," with teachers having the most

promising approach to receiving LGS [30]. LGS noted that it took longer to record complete information, especially when adding student uniformity and ability. As a result, it produced exclusive information that could be shared with receptive individuals. However, according to a prior informal survey by Guskey, many students and their guardians attempted to interpret practically all classifications (e.g., below essential, fundamental, competent, and advanced) regarding letter grading [31]. A decade of developing experience with LGS may have shifted perceptions about the LGS's meaning and efficacy.

In reality, grading is often a combination of various elements that instructors respect, such as professional duties, good attitudes, and comprehension [22]. Teachers recognise the importance of effort in accomplishment, student inspiration, and the recurring repercussions and problems of LGS [22, 29, 32]. Teachers differentiate educational collaborators like capacity, work habits, involvement, attention, exertion, and enhancement as relevant to grading from different learner features. For instance, gender, socioeconomic esteem or behaviour, entering manners, and metaphysical and political thoughts do not apply to grading [33].

2.5. Diverse Perspectives of Students and Stakeholders on LGS

Simon & Schuster had a range of opinions regarding LGS. "Most students never talk about LGS, yet enough of the time-poor grades make them feel foolish, backward and filled with humiliation, and almost all of the time it's not true" [34]. Also, strong grades make other students think they're smarter, which may not be valid. Then all of the students and their parents begin competing and comparing. They regarded their friends as rivals at all times. The savvy students think they're smarter and grow complacent, while the average students think they're stupid and have no chance of catching up. And those who are expected to aid children fail to do so by guardians and teachers. Almost all primary duties should be carried out by themselves. Instead, they merely pile on the strain and make up more and more tests [34]. It is typical for students' and parents' impressions of grades to be harmful since they do not receive adequate grading in any evaluation. Language, family history, guardian's employment, education, jobs, degree of entry behaviours, classmates, and motivating reasons contribute to opposing perspectives regarding LGS in students' lives.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. This framework introduces and describes the issue of teachers' perceptions of LGS, which was included in the evaluation process in Nepal in 2016 as a research problem. Qualitatively on. After reviewing a large amount of material, it was determined the guiding ideas of postmodernism should be applied to this study. The research is mainly based on Lev Vygotsky's

Social theory of constructivism. According to Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, cognitive abilities are gained through social guidance and construction. The development and formation of abilities like memory, learning, problem-solving, and attention occur through the role of culture as a mediator. His approach to child development can be considered a social constructivism form. He believes that social interactions produce cognitive functions.

Similarly, the concerns of teachers' views and perceptions would not be connected. On the other hand, teachers have employed learning factors, and students have encountered appraisal aspects in the classroom. Moreover, each teacher's experience and approaches may differ, and opinions of the LGS may range significantly. Consequently, learners' cultural experiences and unique teacher perceptions may not be comparable to comprehension. A synthesis set of two fundamental concerns for grading in a teacher's viewpoint was established on the conceptual framework, mentioning the above world view and literature reviews. They explore the meaning, comprehension, relevance, beliefs, practices, and consequences of LGS from teachers' sides and highlight its complex components.

4. Methodology

Qualitative research allows insight into people's behaviours, attitudes, motivations, aspirations, culture, experiences, lifestyles and even knowledge [35]. Phenomenological research seeks to understand and describe the universal essence of a phenomenon. Here the study tries to explore how teachers feel and comprehend the LGS. It was designed phenomenologically and analysed using narrative or descriptive approaches. Purposive sampling strategies are used in conjunction with developing a semi-structured in-depth interview protocol tool. As Creswell states, in qualitative research, the researcher actively picks or determines the settings or participants, which aids the researcher in completely comprehending the research problem [36]. Research participants were chosen from secondary school teachers only who were routinely engaged in teaching-learning activities and involved in the school assessment system of Nepal. An in-depth interview was taken face-to-face with the participants by recording audios, note-taking, and memos built up, if feasible, for data transcription and authentication.

Boyd says 2 to 10 participants often achieve research saturation [37]. Similarly, Creswell suggests a phenomenological study that includes "extensive interviews with up to 10 persons" [38]. However, only six participants-the teaching professionals-from secondary schools in Tarakeshwor Municipality of Kathmandu district- were interviewed for 30–60 min each. Due to the restrictions of COVID-19 and the teachers' hectic program, we used a convenience sample of interviewees who had shown willingness to participate in the study. All informants consented to participate. The interviews were conducted in Nepali, the mother tongue of the respondents. Then, they were audio-recorded, transcribed manually, and sent to the informants to receive agreement on their transcribed statements (communicative validity, [39]). The final versions were submitted for content analysis. The thematic areas of the study were drawn both in a deductive (by the interview guiding questions) and in an inductive way (emergent themes from the data).

During data collection, paying attention to ethical aspects such as informed permission, the hazard of potentiality, and confidentiality from a participant is a must. In qualitative research, researchers are positivistic. In this research, too, the researcher was entirely positive in receiving information from the informant.

For data collection, the following participants were chosen who:

a) had ten or more years of experience as a secondary level school teacher who is currently working.

b) were involved in teachers training center as trainees and also took part as a subject expert, played the role of superintendent in SEE in different exams centered in Tarakeshwor Municipality.

c) Participated in the frequent evaluation of SEE answer sheets throughout the year. They had fully immersed themselves in the LGS.

These informants were expected to address the interview on meaning, purpose, benefits, and drawbacks, creating concerns in the instructor and living difficulties in the classroom about the LGS and exam hall experience.

The sample consisted of four males and two females with experience ranging from ten to thirty-five years. They appeared to be a mix of caste/ethnicity and instructor experience-one of the interviewees identified as Dalit, one Janajati and the rest of the others are identified as Brahmin/Chhetri, Although none of the participants shared the same academic major, which allowed for various perspectives, they are all Secondary-level permanent school teachers. The frequency statistics and demographics of the participants are presented here.

Table 1. Statistical data of informants.

Assumed name of Informants	Age	Teaching Experiences	Sex	Ethnicity	School
Participant 1	47	21	M	Brahmin/Chhetri	Government
Participant 2	54	31	M	Brahmin/Chhetri	Government
Participant 3	31	11	F	Dalit	Institutional
Participant 4	46	19	M	Brahmin/Chhetri	Institutional
Participant 5	50	31	F	Brahmin/Chhetri	Government
Participant 6	34	14	M	Janajati	Institutional

5. Results

Exploring the roots of how teachers perceive and comprehend the LGS and its problems is the main objective of this research study. The end product is a synthesis of the teacher's opinions that shares a profound perception of their lived experiences and understanding. The in-depth interview, with recorded transcriptions, has assisted the researcher in detecting respondents' words and thinking patterns setting the scene for subsequent theme emergence [40]. It was achieved by observing trends in how teacher participants expressed their facial expressions and comprehension of LGS. Then the implications were organised into groups to facilitate the formulation and interpretation of the themes.

The qualitative survey allowed the researchers to interview all promised teachers about the phenomena of letter grading and how they practised and understood it. Six teachers who could speak about their own experiences with the LGS and its issues were selected for the interview. The descriptions below were intended to assist the six participants in experiencing the spirit of their stories. One of the interview probe questions the researchers asked the instructors was what guidance they would offer concerning letter grading. When all the participants' comments were compiled and fully defined, they were provided to represent their voices.

Participant 1 is a permanent teacher in a Government school. His engagement included students, the teachers' government, and intellectual groups. He is now going to designate the first as LGS. He argued that letter grading assigns students' levels based on their achievement in specific courses. Furthermore, he recognised an evaluation system that assesses a student's accomplishment based on overall performance during the academic year. This perception explained LGS, which was developed to measure overall learner performance achievement.

Teachers, students, and parents have different perspectives and attitudes about letter grading. It is because LGS was just launched seven years ago. Therefore, stakeholders are not enthused by its characteristics despite understating the benefits and drawbacks. He had, however, explained some positive points in this manner.

According to him,
"Letter grading is a technique that helps ease exam students' nervousness. Therefore, according to their performance, most students have been allowed to enroll in grade eleven."

"As an inherent concern of LGS, it must standardise its ideals and standards to sustain its educational quality. Therefore, the allocation system had intended specific ways and principles in our school assessment approach to maintaining social organisation."

He proposes the three factors below that analyse the means and beliefs of letter grading.

He stated that his understandings were as follows:

i) Students have received their performance level and can pick their study area for the future.

ii) It is a liberal approach to evaluating and encouraging learners.

iii) The assessment method aids in reducing school dropout rates, particularly at the secondary level.

Participant 2 added that:
"In Nepal, the teaching profession has been proven to be complicated. The teachers are in charge of most instructional activities and programs in school. As a result, teachers encounter challenges while implementing letter grading to evaluate students at the school level, including responsibility for measuring students' achievement in each chosen area."

Therefore, he believes the teacher should have prioritised the following factors in this case. He further added,

"Student grading, homework, classroom activities, project work, cooperation, unit test results, terminal exam results, discipline and attendance records, health and cleanliness, etc., are all based on the selection standards. So it is a practical and well-known inappropriate school evaluation. And some are also tied to ranking, while others are not."

"It indicates that numerous inadequate instruments may be employed for in-school evaluation. These instructional tools, like the proposal, field study, self-assessment, teamwork, and so on, have aided learners in learning subject matter, mainly through examples. However, in the quarterly test, no concealment tactics are used in school evaluation; only theoretical and practical examinations are taken to secure marks in numbers and converted into a letter grading for assessment."

As a result, he discovered various faults when using it in school evaluation.

"The mark earned in the SEE Board Exam is included in the improper grading method and insignificance in the calculation of grading actions for grades 9 and 10 only."

"Even though the grading system has an enormous influence and needs in our nation, it also relieves the strain on learners and their guardians. Furthermore, it can regulate the sensitivity of the test method's thoughtlessness and reduce the traditional evaluation system's negative influence. Mr. Shah provided the two arguments in response to these concerns."

"First and foremost, it helps lower dropout rates in school-level education and alleviates test anxiety. The assessment technique is as precise and generous as coded for observation."

Participant 3 was a 31-year-old Dalit with 11 years of service in a Private school. While our interview dialogue progresses through the primary concerns one by one, she begins to explain the meaning and principles of LGS in his opinion.

"The total number of credits is divided by the aggregate score. They contain raw score, grade point, and grade point average intervals. It differs from the standard grading system."

According to Participant 3,
"It is used in Nepal to boost learning results. It deviates

from a single-point system. It assesses learners in terms of range. As a result, students find it less discouraging."

"Gradually, students will realise that a higher GPA means something to them, which may resolve their uncertainty. Teachers may educate students on what it means indefinitely."

In addition, she outlines the LGS standards and ideals. For example, in her experience, the Nepalese letter grading system employs a score interval like 90 to 100 A+ to eliminate measurement error, which seems more realistic.

Participant 4 answered by asking questions regarding the teacher's duties while using LGS in school evaluation. He stated that teachers must see tests and student evaluations differently.

"First, they must comprehend the 101-point scale myth. This approach is presently in use in SEE and should also be used in internal school assessments."

The instructor has a strong sense of responsibility. He has gained a lot of expertise while administering the SEE and School trimester exams each year. The researchers asked, "What kinds of experiences have you had in school examinations?" He responded briefly.

"The first problem I've experienced as a teacher is misunderstanding parents who utilise the traditional marking system. Second, we employ a similar assessment technique for a new, distinct marking system."

I asked him again about the necessity for the usefulness of LGS in the current context of Nepalese schools, which he humbly illustrated here.

"As far as I can tell, one of the essential aspects of LGS is that it does not allow any students to fail, which implies that it opens opportunities for students to pursue more courses in their professions. Second, it has lessened the commercialisation of education that private boarding schools have engaged in. Third, we are attempting to emulate what is currently being done."

"However, LGS has faced several problems in applying it in school evaluation in Nepal since 2016. I humbly urge that he explain the significant consequences of LGS."

He was pretty honest in his description.

According to participant 5:

"The previous assessment model for the new marking system is a massive barrier for LGS. Another issue is that this approach is misunderstood by guardians, instructors, and students. Students believe that they no longer need to work hard. Even parents and students appear less enthusiastic about their children's education."

She further added,

"LGS, to be honest, has a lot of flaws. It can be deleted in the future when the assessment method is improved. Education quality might steadily increase if the assessment system was practical and effective."

She made a strong suggestion.

"The assessment system must be changed, which primarily depends on classical memorisation. Instead, project-based evaluation should be used. In addition, classroom activities and our approach to teaching and learning

should be modified simultaneously."

When she was asked further probing questions, such as, "What sorts of non-testing devices are employed in the evaluation system of Nepal?"

She answered gently as,

"Most Nepalese schools do not make extensive use of the government policy. As a result, CAS has been implemented but is not used correctly, and most teachers and school officials are unaware of it."

He further added LGS has many motivating reasons for displaying the instructor's results. The answer of participant 2 is,

"It encourages instructors because they understand the implications and purpose of the system. We are now using a new design with the classical model, which must be upgraded. However, instructors will experience less stress due to errors caused by erroneous assessments as it is utilised correctly."

"It demonstrated that this newly developed system needed to be altered into the shape of a new one. Furthermore, because it comprises eight categorised measures that practically do not assess learners' natural talents, it refers to the kids in class eleven as having an above-inadequate grading 'D'. As a result, the NEB should amend it as soon as feasible.".

Participant 6 stated that

"The letter grading method assesses the learners' performance and assigns the required grades based on their learning outcomes or learning, rather than evaluating the learners and awarding degrees, as in the conventional way of evaluation."

In his perspective

"LGS is a beneficial technique for evaluating students, and the standards or foundation of the letter grading systems are acceptable in the context of Nepal. It features eight scale norms that range from exceptional to non-graded, with the highest being extraordinary and the lowest being insufficient."

In the evaluation system framework of Nepal, she clearly outlined the critical responsibilities of teachers. According to him,

"The primary job of instructors is to ensure that students and guardians understand LGS. Similarly, teachers should manage the letter grading test system appropriately."

In this question, participant 1 highlighted that;

"The responsible teachers' actions while using it in school evaluation should discover that letter grading systems are highly beneficial to the learners' future success. Students who used to flunk in SLC are now degree-level students. Furthermore, students now have the opportunity to pursue further education due to LGS. Isn't the letter grading system adorable? It also assists pupils in minimising their degradation and disgrace."

He further added

"In the assessment system, the letter grading system is essential. It contributes to learners' educational progress and future chances. It has encouraged the student to do better in formative and summative assessments. It is

critical to shield youngsters from their sad habits."
Similarly, participant 5 put her view as follows,
"Nonetheless, it faces several assessment hurdles. Teachers and students are unwilling to participate in teaching-learning activities due to a lack of knowledge of its essential idea and spreading misconceptions. There is a lot of ambiguity, such as between 79-80 and 89-90. The distinction is the same, but the value scale is different. What are our options for resolving it? Many concerns about Nepal's current status have been raised in LGS."
Participant 3 added that
"The letter grading system has many drawbacks, but understanding it positively in its context and informing students and guardians can help. Most students believe this method is unclear since they do not comprehend the aim of the letter grading system. The majority of pupils are unable to recognise its norms and ideals. Furthermore, it is referred to as testing devices in the context of assessment tools. In the context of Nepal, testing instruments are widely used. As previously noted, LGS has been adopted as a motivator for instructors due to its numerous benefits and ease of use in creating result sheets. It should encourage teachers while being used in Nepal's school-level evaluation system to improve educational quality."

6. Discussion

It studies teachers' perceptions of LGS and its issues in the context of Tarakeshwor Municipality. Its primary goals are to investigate teachers' perceptions of the letter grading system and the implementation issues in Nepal's school evaluation system. The government of Nepal introduced the letter grading system late in 2015, with no prior preparation, dissemination, or diffusion effort in the education sector. As a result, it caused several issues throughout its implementation. However, with much effort in its reformation and performance, it gained the attention of popularity among the teachers, students, parents, and stakeholders. As a result, everybody understood its purpose and advantages. The evaluation system encourages talented and weak students to compete favourably in the classroom with total effort and power. At the same time, it advocates for eliminating the stress and embarrassment of both the student and parents.

The Letter Grading System is founded on the assumption that information or knowledge is produced and may be continually expanded based on instructors' experiences and understanding of the same phenomena in different situations [41]. As a result, constructivism is the theoretical framework of this study. "Various persons may build meaning in different ways, even with the same occurrence," according to the constructivist [42]. Therefore, participants provide the meaning and idea of LGS in these ways as the foundation of these concerns.

The total number of credits is divided by the aggregate score. They contain raw score, grade point, and grade point average intervals. It differs from the standard grading system.

It was adopted in Nepal to boost learning results. It deviates from a single-point plan. It assesses learners in terms of range. As a result, students find it less scary. Knowledge is built in various ways in the constructivist approach and is not a permanent person's property; standards-based letter grading procedures allow students to see their learning and work with people around them to sustain the knowledge. The LGS is associated with motivating variables that aid in improving learning outcomes. With positive rivalry in classroom activities, it inspires both instructors and students.

It was also evident in the significant findings that teachers' perceptions of home assignments, classwork, assessments, project work, and standards/learning targets are included in the letter grading system. Similarly, the teachers' perceptions of the item with the most significant impact on their grading levels further establish the thought that grading systems may impact students' achievement levels in the practical setting. However, such techniques are not discussed in school for the final evaluation of students.

On the other hand, Cross and Frary agree that students were questioned concerning inference and notions of their professors' application of things [43]. Moreover, students can become frustrated and confused by unreliable measures when interpreting their teachers' grading [44]. Therefore, this study did not completely measure students' frustration or confusion levels, inconsistent responses to the letter grading, and lack of cohesive perceptions of the school's grading system. Instead of these obstacles, it is expected that the instructors' grading experiences, understanding, and practices would resolve this sort of difficulty under the goals of Nepal's assessment system.

Based on the conflicting replies of instructors regarding their impressions of grading systems, the researcher found that a range of grading category scales had converged on one another in terms of subject area performance level. As a result, they are either content or dissatisfied with realising their potential to a certain degree. Even though a standardised letter grading system aims to produce a meaningful, reliable, valid, and consistent image of students' learning success, this product will be ineffective unless students, parents, and other stakeholders comprehend the LGS. One research finding considerably influenced students' performance and behaviour-changing levels. That was the teachers' interpretation of what their grades meant.

All the kids attending our secondary school program come from our newly constructed basic level classrooms, where they only get grades on their final assignments. All students get detailed comments from teachers and are encouraged to self-assess their progress, but their work is not marked in any ranking system or other evaluation instruments. The responding teachers shared their thoughts on using non-testing technologies in our schools, such as project work, classroom assignments, homework, group work, practical work, etc. It is necessary to apply for the examination to test students' proficiency. But this is not the case until lately. However, they claim that these instruments have not been employed because of a lack of provision in Nepal's

evaluation system for assessment at school levels. Nonetheless, the students naturally exhibit a high level of curiosity in their learning and are motivated mainly through internal incentives to enhance their knowledge and comprehension spontaneously.

As a researcher, the authors ask the instructor if the LGS motivates the teacher to improve academically in the school's assessment system. An informant responds interestingly, illustrating as follows: LGS also encourages teachers for their academic activities such as creating a grade sheet using computer software, announcing the students' grading by providing instant feedback, ensuring the learning activities of students in the classroom, and inspiring students and their parents. The primary educational goal of grading is to assess student success in learning within a particular curriculum of specific classes [45]. In addition, it helps compare student achievement, instructor output, and the institution's state. The grading system is most commonly used to contrast past vs. present, effort vs. performance, student vs. student, student vs. standard, and achievement vs. teachers [46]. It is also used to compare teacher, school, and district performance.

Similarly, letter grading is a powerful instrument in managerial choices on the election, graduation, maintenance, and program entry [45]. Its primary responsibility is to assess learners' and teachers' knowledge, abilities, and confidence. On the other hand, grading necessitates either mean scores or abstracting a large amount of data into a single sign such as C, D, and so on, which is an ineffective manner of communicating student learning [47, 48]. Moreover, grading is presented to students as they tend to lose focus on their pleasure in studying. Still, they are eager to attend the next class despite not thoroughly comprehending relevant course material [6].

As one person put it: However, it faces several assessment hurdles. Learners and teachers are unwilling to teach and study due to less comprehending its basic notion and spreading rumours. There is a lot of ambiguity, such as the difference between 79 and 80 and 94 and 95. What are our options for resolving it? So many obstacles have been demonstrated in LGS in the current setting of Nepal.

Furthermore, LGS has created ambiguous challenges and circumstances in evaluation methods, such as students' perceptions of teachers' activities. They are biased, injustice in providing marks, the interval between two scale values is inadequate, and the learners' internal skills are not gathered in average GPA score, which is readily unacceptable. The ranking has been done in a humiliating way and lacks credibility in evaluation.

On the contrary, LGS provides several advantages for users in school evaluation. First, when the literature and educationists triangulate the participant's notion, researchers confirm that this issue may be trusted indefinitely: LGS, in my opinion, is excellent for students' bright futures. Students who used to flunk in SLC are now university students. They are now able to pursue further education as a result of LGS. Isn't it the letter grading system's magic? It also assists kids in lessening their degradation and humiliation of them.

As a result, it is fascinating that LGS has more benefits, due to which many students have obtained various prospects for future education and work placement. However, it is not forgotten that it should be amended, decreased in conditions, and made appraisal without biases in evaluation in the future.

7. Conclusion

The LGS has devised a rating and progressive ranking structure of student performances based on their final assessment of the SEE board exam and other School terminal examinations. It has been discovered that teachers have not yet thoroughly understood the idea and its application technique. There are specific difficulties or challenges to LGS implementation, such as the idea and relevance of LGS, LGS norms and values, accountability of teachers and administrators, usability and happiness of students, and others. Because it has been determined that teachers cannot fully discharge their obligations, they are provided with creative grading knowledge through the orientation program offered by the NEB or other organisations.

Currently, nine progressive category scales are rated from excellent to inadequate. It still has to be improved to enhance evaluation quality in education. As mentioned by participants, most students today regard LGS as liberally advocating regulations and serving in-school evaluation by taking any grades. As a result of their opposing views on LGS, most pupils cannot get high marks on such measures. They do not inspire, overtly or implicitly, and cannot develop prospective learnability via instructor orientation. As a result, the instructor is recognised as a motivating force for effectively implementing the LGS and fixing learners' difficulties through the LGS. Teachers identify it in students' minds as a 'charismatic evaluation instrument' by gaining greater proficiency in education with the aid of the meritocracy of LGS.

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