

**The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Examination of Nepal: Exploring Negative
Consequences**

by

Yogendra Bahadur Bhattarai

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**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada**

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Yogendra Bahadur Bhattarai

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the issues associated with the stakes of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exam of Nepal, to explore the negative consequences of the exam results, and make suggestions regarding how extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results can be minimized. Adopting a mixed method research approach, this study applied a sequential explanatory research design, namely QUAL → quan (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), where qualitative data were used to explore findings and the quantitative data triangulated, validated, and illustrated the findings from the qualitative phase. In Phase 1, findings were derived from the qualitative data collected by conducting one-on-one semi-structured interviews with ten stakeholders (i.e., two school principals, two teachers, two guardians, and four Grade 10 students) about the SLC exam. In Phase 2, questionnaires were administered to 150 Grade 10 students in Nepal. Phase 1 findings were validated through statistical analysis of the questionnaire data. The results suggest several issues contributing to the stakes of the SLC exam: socio-cultural factors, including the test's historical importance and influence in society; and, its general social value, including the issues of prestige and face. Four categories of negative consequences of the SLC exam results were also identified: 1) long-lasting chronic consequences; 2) short- and long-term psychological consequences; 3) career-related consequences; and, 4) extreme negative consequences. The study suggests strategies to address these negative consequences including practical and vocational education for unsuccessful students, respectful and responsible family and school environments, and alternatives to the SLC exam.

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For any inadequacies or errors that may remain in this work, of course, the responsibility is entirely my own, and I will correct and improve them in future research studies.

List of Abbreviations

DEO	District Education Offices
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certification
GCE-OL	General Commissioner of Examinations- Ordinary Level
IBM	International Business Machines
ICSEE	Indian Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
ICSEE	Indian Certificate of Secondary Education
ISEC	Institute for Social and Economic Change
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCEE	National College Entrance Exam
NHSSP	National Health Sector Support Program
OCE	Office of the Controller of Examination
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSSLT	Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SD	Standard Deviation
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SOL	Standards of Learning
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSCE	Secondary School Leaving Exam
SSLC	Secondary School Leaving Certificate

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The conceptual framework for the present study began developing as a result of my experiences in two courses- *Curriculum in Language Teaching* and *Language Testing and Assessment*, which are part of the Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies MA Program at Carleton University. During the first year of my MA, I became increasingly interested in language testing and assessment, and in particular, one of the high-stakes tests of Nepal, the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination, commonly abbreviated as the 'SLC' exam. My keen interest in this issue was sparked by the fusion of my experience with empirical research relating to high-stakes tests and the theoretical knowledge about the high-stakes tests that I gained in the MA program. The perceptions that every year a number of students who fail the SLC exam commit suicide encouraged me further to pursue this issue in greater depth. I began my investigation with a comprehensive search for empirical research studies that have focused on the SLC exam and its *impact* on test-takers -- the consequences (Messick, 1989) of using tests or as McNamara and Roever (2006) have explained, drawing on Messick: "what happens in our education systems and the larger social context when we use tests (p. 14). Based on my search, it appears that there has yet to be any empirical studies exploring the negative consequences of the SLC exam of Nepal on test-takers. The severity of the test's impact on test-takers paired with the lack of empirical research in this area has motivated me to conduct an empirical study on the SLC exam of Nepal, with the aim of exploring the factors that are responsible for these extremely negative consequences.

In the sections which follow further information is provided about the SLC exam as background to the research study which is the focus of this thesis; this includes information

regarding the test's administration and SLC exam results trend followed by a review of the impact of test results on test-takers and a detailed definition of high-stakes testing. A review of relevant literature is presented in the second Chapter.

Background to the SLC Exam of Nepal

Mathema (2007) provides the following description of the modern education system in Nepal:

The modern education system in Nepal is one of the youngest in the world. In 1951, after the fall of the 104-year rule Rana oligarchy in Nepal, there were only 9,000 pupils in primary, 1,700 in secondary schools and a little over one hundred in two undergraduate colleges.

There was no university until 1991 in Nepal and the adult literacy stood at a bare 5% (p. 46).

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

The Current SLC Exam and its Administration

The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Examination is a national annual examination administered simultaneously to all Grade 10 students within the Nepalese secondary school system. The SLC exam has become locally known as the 'iron-gate' because it is a high-stakes exam which has the power to open the door to further studies and academic careers for those who pass, but keeps those doors shut to students who fail. In other words, it is a powerful gate-keeper for those who are required to take it.

Mathema and Bista (2006) remark on the organizational structure of the SLC exam of Nepal:

The highest body is the SLC Examination Board chaired by the Secretary of Education. The Board has nine members, consisting of eight administrators from different governmental bodies and an educationist from education field appointed by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES). The Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE) is the secretariat of the Board. The Board makes policy decisions regarding the entire SLC process (p. 189).

Five Regional Education Directorates for each of the five Development Regions (Eastern, Central, Western, Mid-Western, and Far-Western Development Region), and 75 District Education Offices (DEO) in all 75 districts of Nepal have been established under MOES to manage and conduct the SLC exams locally. However, the District Education Offices are the principal agencies which manage and conduct the examinations according to instructions and regulations provided by Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE). The organizational structure of the SLC exam can be summarized in the following figure.

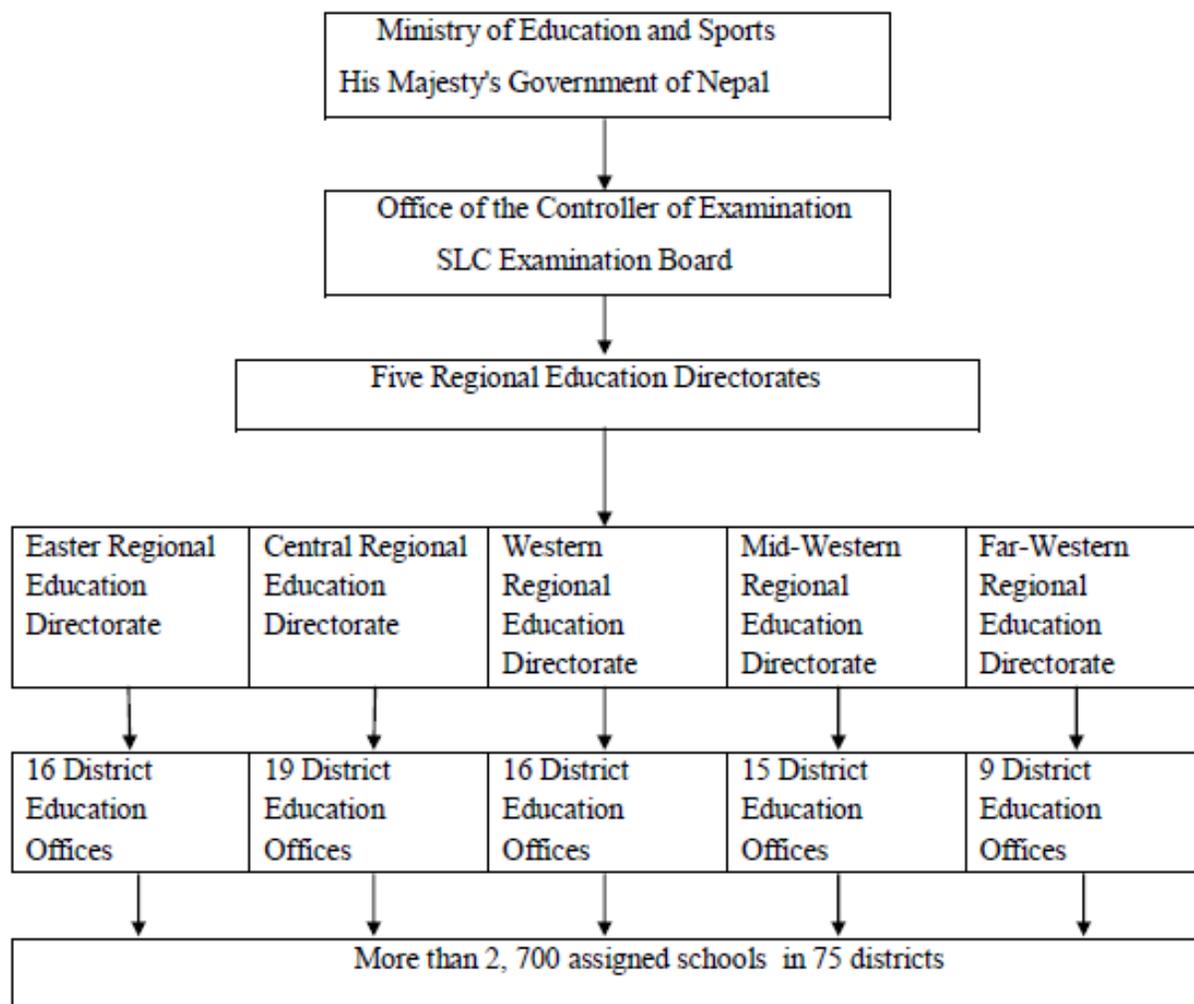


Figure 1: Organizational structure of the SLC examination of Nepal (MOES)

The exam is generally administered throughout an eight day period in April/May of each year. The exam questions cover eight subjects (six compulsory and two optional) - one subject per day- and the exam is taken in all five Development Regions of Nepal. The passing grade for each subject is 32% (32 marks out of 100). In the past, the same exam questions were used across all five Development Regions, however, in recent years, this practice has been changed due to financial considerations and decentralization of the educational system of the country. This change was brought about in order to better accommodate cases of examination cancellation

or postponement and in order to reduce the economic burden of exam re-organization throughout the country.

Mathema and Bista (2006) explain how answer books of the SLC exams are marked and present the procedural steps of the marking system for the SLC exam in Nepal. Mathema and Bista make the following observations regarding the grading scheme of the SLC exam:

The answer sheets of the SLC exam are collected in marking centers assigned by the Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE). The marking centers can be both the Regional Education Directorates and District Education Offices. According to a newly established trend, answer books are marked through a conference marking system. In a conference marking system, examiners are required to come to the answer book marking centers. In this system, answer books are marked by a team of subject examiners. Before the answer books are released for marking, they are first coded in the marking centers and then given to the examiners directly on an individual basis or through the head examiners of the respective subjects. Coding is done only in the six core subjects, and Optional Mathematics and Computer Education.

Mathema and Bista (2006) explain the rationale for coding in this way: "The main purpose of coding is to maintain anonymity of the examinee and confidentiality of the answer books" (p. 199).

They also explain how marks are verified:

Having finished marking the answer sheets, two copies of mark slips are forwarded to the Office of the Controller of Examination. After verification of marks, the SLC Examination Board approves the publication of results, which get published in Kathmandu through a

Government daily newspaper- *Gorkhapatra*. The result is generally published in June/ July within 60 days of the last exam date (p, 199).

The SLC Exam Results Trend

Exam results trend in Nepal (1994- 2013). Shedding light on the alarming downward trend in SLC exam performance, Mathema (2007) says:

Unfortunately, failure is more common than success in SLC examinations. An analysis of the SLC results for the past ten years reveals a failure rate of over 55 percent on average, indicating a huge wastage of the public and private resources invested in education. Even more serious is the great social cost this high failure rate places on the nation as most failures occur among students from socially and economically disadvantaged communities studying in public schools in rural areas (cited in Bhatta, 2007, p. ii).

The above account points to the problematic nature of the SLC exam which consistently produces a failure rate of more than half of its annual test-takers. This disturbing trend suggests that the “Iron gate” exam may not be doing justice to the majority of students who are required to take the test each year. The following table shows the percentage of students who have passed the SLC exam of Nepal over the past 20 years.

Table 1

Year-wise SLC exam results (1994 - 2013)

S. N.	Year	No. Examinee	Pass %	S.N.	Year	No. Examinee	Pass %
1	1994	79420	31.30%	11	2004	255607	46.18%
2	1995	79588	42.97%	12	2005	274164	38.72%
3	1996	90458	38.30%	13	2006	295182	40.38%
4	1997	116002	36.52%	14	2007	347185	58.64%
5	1998	113257	47.54%	15	2008	367041	63.73%
6	1999	139202	49.20%	16	2009	412081	68.47%
7	2000	205539	45.72%	17	2010	412592	64.31%
8	2001	184226	31.62%	18	2011	454022	55.50%
9	2002	201068	31.22%	19	2012	528257	46.16%
10	2003	230872	32.05%	20	2013	547165	41.57%

Official Record of the Office of the Controller of Examination

Table 1 presents the passing percentile of SLC exam results over a 20-year period. The data show that the highest pass percentage in the SLC exam was 68.47% in 2009 and the lowest was 31.22% in 2001. The average pass percentage of the SLC exam in this 20-year period is 45.50%. Experts say that the higher pass percentages in the years 2008-2010, which is shown on the blue-shaded portion of the Table, were a byproduct of political upheaval and instability in the society. During this two year period, the governing monarchy was abolished ending a 240-year-long reign over Nepal. After this historical event, the first election of the Constitution Assembly was held. Experts argue that due to the country's state of political turmoil at the time, the concerned authorities were more flexible during the marking of the SLC exams answer books. As a result, the passing percentiles of the SLC exam spiked in 2009, 2010, and 2011. However, there is little academic research on exam results in this period to support this claim.

The data presented in Table 1 show that the number of examinees have been rapidly increasing annually from approximately eighty thousand in 1994 to more than a half million in 2013, however; the pass percentage seems to have remained constant. It is a shocking reality that a high-stakes test which determines the future of hundreds of thousands of young people has seen little reform in nearly two decades despite having such a low passing percentile. This observation, based on only the most recent available data, is a disheartening glimpse into the SLC exam's lengthy history. From the above accounts, one can deduce that the potential for negative consequences may, in fact, be increasing because many more students are being affected.

Figure 2 below shows a fluctuating trend of SLC exam results over a 20-year period.

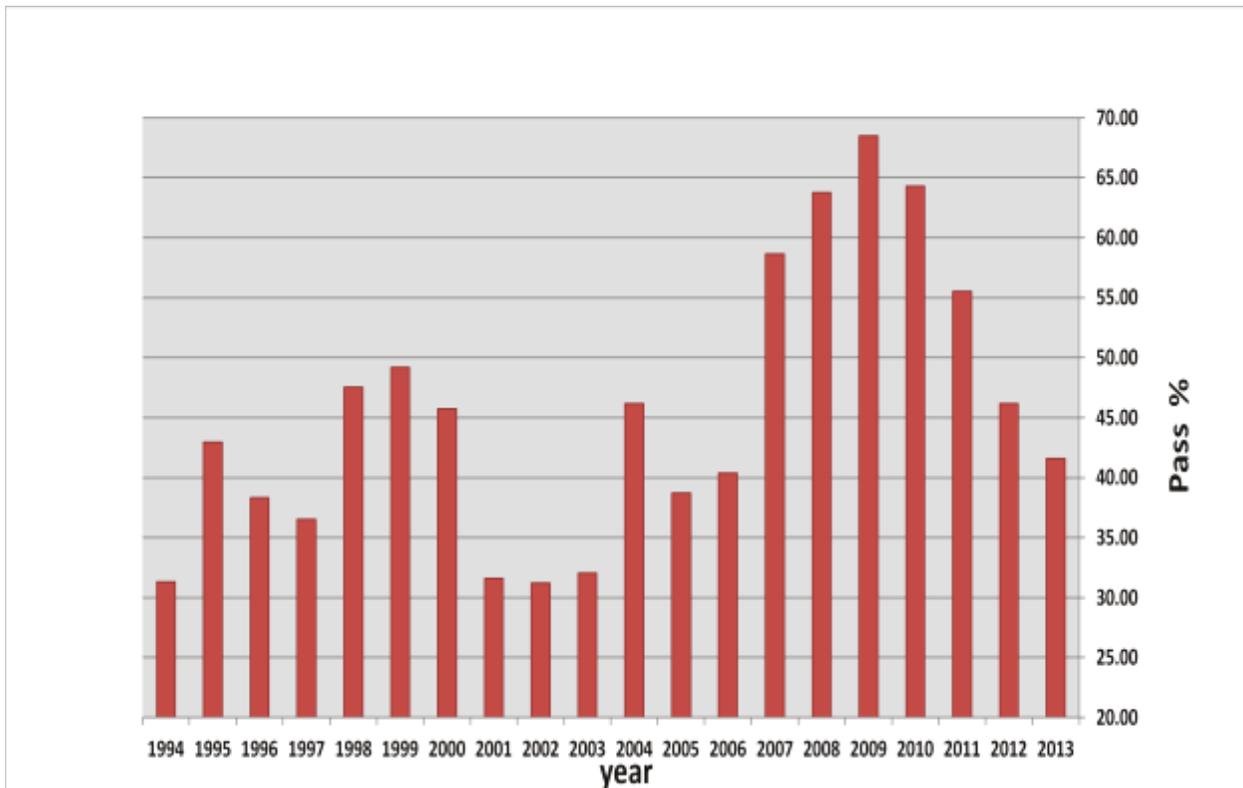


Figure 2. Bar diagram of results trend of the SLC exam (1994-2013)

Figure 2 shows that the SLC exam result in the year 1995 was higher than in 2013. Similarly, the exam results in the year 1998 and 1999 were higher than in 2012 and 2013. The figure also shows that the exam results went higher in the years 2007- 2011 and again dropped down exactly the same way as it happened after the year 2000. One can deduce from this figure that the SLC exam results have been fluctuating for many years instead of going up or improving.

Exam results trends among SAARC countries (1997- 200). The trend of the SLC exam results can be compared with other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries, which have similar school leaving examination systems. According to Mathema and Bista (2006), in all SAARC countries public examination is conducted at the end of secondary level. Countries like India and Sri Lanka are considering the abolition of the system of labeling students 'fail' (Mathema & Bista, 2006, p. 343). The following table presented by Mathema and Bista (2006, p. 343) shows a brief comparison of exam results trends among SAARC countries.

Table 2

Exam result trends among SAARC countries (1997- 200; Mathema & Bista, 2006, p. 343)

Country	Exam	Target grades	Year 1997		Year 1998		Year 1999		Year 2000	
			No. of candidates	Pass %						
Bangladesh	CSEC	10	716,865	51.45%	722300	46.97%	837,220	54.62%	918,045	41.58%
Bhutan	ISEC	10	1476	87.07%	1796	76.78%	2240	68.53%	3,159	79.74%
India										
Delhi	ICSEE	10	56,053	93.48%	61558	91.06%	68083	94.83%	71,458	94.15%
Karnata	SSLC	10	459,143	44.55%	460134	57.39%	460,379	51.85%	507,750	51.60%
Nepal	SLC	10	116002	36.52%	113257	47.54%	139202	49.20%	205539	45.72%
Maldives	SSCE	10	1517	67.80%	2020	77.70%	2594	80.99%	3656	51.60%
Pakistan	SSC	10	570199	58%	662816	56%	533,863	56%	664,378	54%
Sri Lanka	GCE-OL	11	360026	29.46%	353372	33.25%	349,464	36.98%	346,796	37.70%

The comparative data in the above table show that all seven SAARC countries have been practicing school leaving examinations in Grade 10 (except Sri Lanka); however, the exam results vary across nations. Table 2 shows that the Delhi based Indian Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (ICSEE) of India has the highest pass percentage, whereas the same kind of Grade 10 examinations of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Karnata based exam of India have almost the same pass percentages as Nepal. Based on the available data, the school leaving examination of Nepal (SLC exam) has the lowest pass percentage among SAARC countries except Sri Lanka.

Figure 3 below shows fluctuating trends of school level exam results among SAARC countries over a 4-year period.

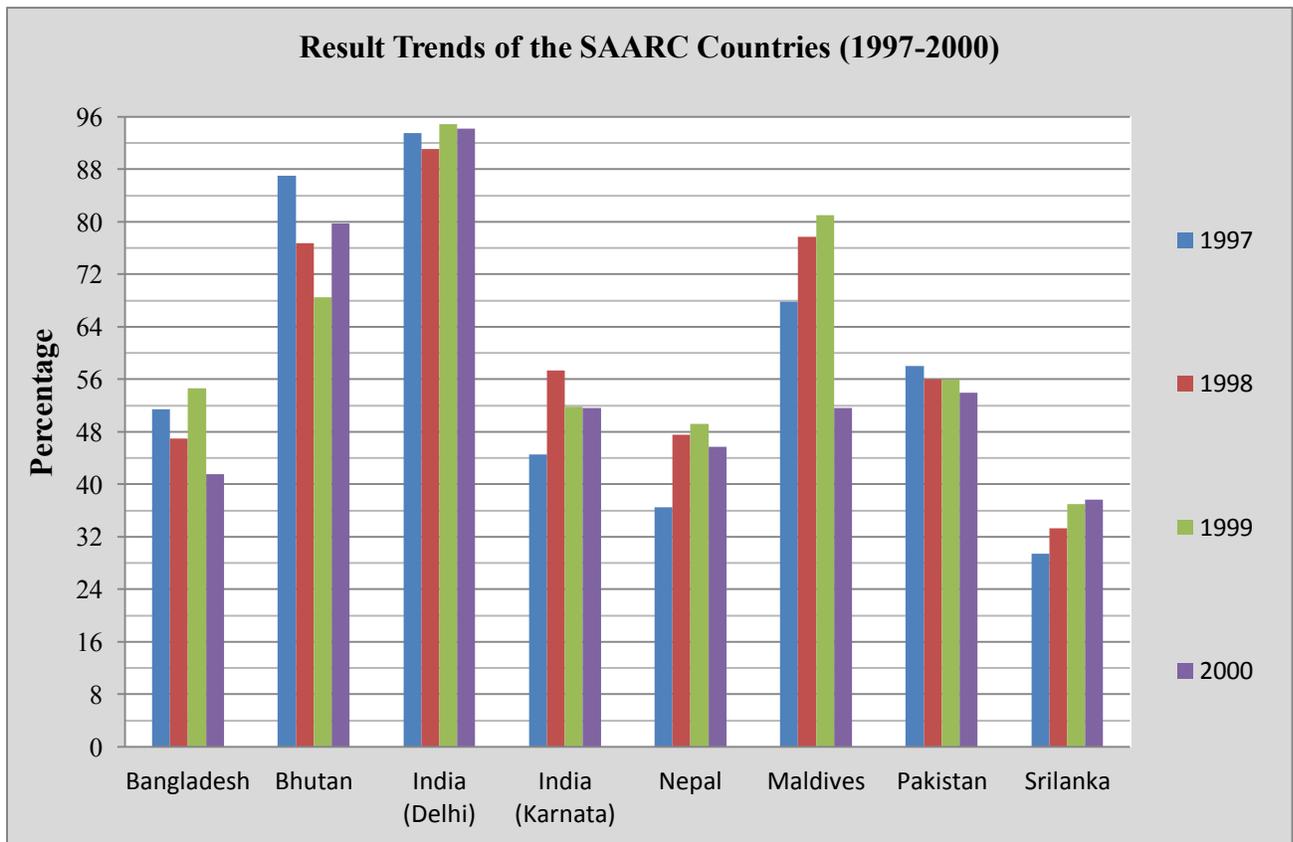


Figure 3. Comparison of exam results trends among SAARC countries (Mathema & Bista, 2006)

Figure 3 shows that the national level high-stakes exam result trends in almost all the SAARC countries mentioned above seem to be fluctuating. Sri Lanka is an exception as the results trend in 1997-2000 (see Figure 3) seems to be improving. However, this inference may not be true as it was made based on only four year of results. Data gathered over a longer period might give a totally different result.

Impact of the SLC Exam Results

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no empirical research focusing on the positive and negative impact of the SLC exam of Nepal on test-takers, except in some progress reports submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sports, and some articles published in newspapers and online.

Positive consequences. The SLC exam, as stated earlier, is an important and popular public examination within the schooling system of Nepal. Many people still believe that the SLC exam can help raise academic standards in a number of ways (Bhatta, 2005). Mathema and Bista (2006) have presented several positive consequences of high-stakes public examinations, which seem to be applicable to the case of the SLC exams. They are summarized as follows:

- (1) Public examinations encourage schools and teachers to do better and be accountable for performances;
- (2) They force teachers to cover entire course contents;
- (3) They provide motivation to the students to learn more;
- (4) They create a competitive learning environment among students and schools; and
- (5) They provide a basis for devising remedial and other special courses for students at risk of failing the examinations.

Although there are some positive consequences of the SLC exam results, these have been overshadowed by the larger number of the SLC exam failures and undesirable consequences resulting from them. Here, I am going to focus on the negative consequences of the SLC exam results.

Negative consequences. According to Gyawali (2013) every year some students take their own lives after failing the SLC exam. Gyawali reports that seven schoolgirls committed suicide in Nepal after failing their School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exams the year before (in 2012). Such repeated incidents have raised serious concerns to all stakeholders and the government. A bitter reality is that it is very difficult to find official data documenting such events. However, immediately after the publication of the annual SLC exam results, many unexpected and tragic incidents are reported. Such incidents tend to be hyped or sensationalized by the media and cause a flurry of discussion annually. They cover the front pages of local and national newspapers of Nepal, especially after the publication of the SLC exam results. In an article published in Kantipur Daily, Risal (2013) states:

June 2011— 7 girls in Rukum committed suicide...; June 2012— 5 girls hung themselves and 2 boys consumed lethal poison...; 11th June 2013— A girl killed herself immediately after hearing the result...

These are neither the lines of any detective story nor the dialogues of a crime serial; but the news headlines in our own electronic media. Analysis of the news in these three consecutive years leads us towards the question: What is the statistical relationship between the month of June and suicide by the youth? The only possible factor may be the results of the SLC examination, the so-called iron-gate of one's life.

The events described above are only a few of the stories that emerged because they could not be hidden due to mass publicity. Gyawali claims that hundreds of incidents occur every year but only a few of them are publicized. The National Health Sector Support Program (NHSSP) report (2011) says that a greater number of the population are victims of exam failure (i.e., more suicides) than the figures which come out in the mass media. Further, the NHSSP report states that many such incidents are not reported or publicized due to legal, cultural and societal reasons.

A large number of suicide attempts and suicide deaths are kept private among only core family members of the victim, likely because suicide in Nepal is an illegal and socially unacceptable phenomenon (NHSSP report, 2011). An alarming number of suicide attempts and suicide cases that occur every year immediately after the publication of the SLC exam results indicate that a large number of the country's youth, perhaps much more than estimated, have been negatively affected by the SLC exam results. Unfortunately, we do not have any official records that reveal how many unsuccessful examinees have experienced mental trauma, extreme stress or panic, have lost their self-esteem and confidence, or have dropped out of the educational system entirely.

It seems as though the SLC exam has become obsolete for a number of reasons. Firstly, the school level education in many countries ends in Grade 12. Therefore, neither are the SLC exam certificates equivalent to school end certificates of foreign countries, nor does one get a good job after passing the SLC exam. Secondly, it has been made ' *a scary beast/monster*' by school administrators, teachers, parents, and in particular by mass media without any specific reason. *A scary beast* is a well-known phrase used in Nepalese society to denote an unknown terrifying creature, called *Haunguji* in the Nepali language.

In this way, through its history, this ordinary exam, like other grade exams, has taken the form of huge cultural celebration.

Defining 'High Stakes' in Testing

Several studies have been conducted on high-stakes tests and their impact on test-takers and other stakeholders under the titles of test consequences, test impact, test anxiety, washback effect, test validity, etc. (Wall, 1997; McNamara, 2000; Hungerland, 2004; Qi's, 2005). A high stakes test is defined and described in a number of ways by experts and educators. For instance, Minarechová (2012) explains:

High-stakes testing is not a new phenomenon in education. It has become part of the education system in many countries. These tests affect the school systems, teachers, students, politicians and parents, whether that is in a positive or negative sense. High-stakes testing is associated with concepts such as a school's accountability, funding and parental choice of school (p. 1).

Further, "high stakes tests are tests from which results are used to make significant educational decisions about schools, teachers, administrators, and students" (Amrein & Berliner, 2002a, p .1). Similarly, Madaus (1988) states that "High-stakes tests are those whose results are used to make important decisions that immediately and directly affect the test-takers and other stakeholders (cited in Qi, 2005, p. 142)". To sum up, the test is said to be high-stakes if its outcome is used as the sole determinant factor for making any important decision.

SLC Exam as a High-Stakes Test

"There are few annual events in Nepal that generate as much public interest and media attention as the publication of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination results"

(Mathema, 2006, p. 31). This indicates how much attention the stakeholders and the nation pay to the SLC exam and how sensationalized it is. Since examinations are arguably the soul of the ethos of education in East Asian societies it is more noticeable that the high-stakes exam is regarded as providing something of an early benchmark against which students will be measured by their society (Cheng, 1996, cited in Manman, 2011, p. 265). Nepal is not the exception of Asian educational culture.

The SLC exam of Nepal is said to be an important exam because it is a powerful gate-keeper that allows the continuation of academic careers for those who pass it and prevents continuation for those who fail. In Bhatta's (2005) words, if success in the SLC examination opens for students windows of opportunities for higher studies or widens their prospect for employment, failure in this examination greatly narrows their options for self development (p. ii). Further, Bhatta says that many people, therefore, take failure in SLC as failure in life. In addition to opportunities for higher studies and jobs, belief and myth systems of Nepalese society associated with the SLC exam results have also played a significant role in magnifying the importance of the SLC exam. Moreover, in Nepal, as in other Asian countries, academic achievement is highly valued. It is the SLC exam, though all other grade exams are high-stakes tests, which is used as a means of evaluating the education system of Nepal. Consequently it has become a focus of all stakeholders: the Government, school administrators, teachers, parents and students. As Mathema states, "success in the SLC exam has been culturally associated with prestige and face to stakeholders."

Having presented a brief account of the SLC exam, I now define the specific focus of the study.

Focus of the Study

It is necessary to clarify that the present study does not explore the negative consequences of the SLC exam on test-takers *before* or *during* the exam. Rather, the present study, as mentioned in the introduction above, explores the impact of the SLC exam after the test-takers have received their results, and the principal factors that are responsible for the extreme negative consequences of the exam results after their publication. To my knowledge, at the time of this study, there were no official reports of such negative consequences on test-takers, family, society, or institutions, etc.; nor were there empirical research studies which investigated the negative consequences of this high-stakes test. In sum, there is a need for intensive research that explores the different dimensions of this complex phenomenon of negative consequences, and suggests ways of reducing such negative impact.

The following chapter presents literature of relevance to the present study with guiding research questions.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

In this chapter I present a brief critical review of research that discusses high-stakes tests, their potential for washback, and possible consequences. I examine research on high-stakes tests and their consequences, broadly construed, because comparatively few studies have explored what factors are responsible for the negative consequences of high-stakes test results (e.g., Sambonsugi, 2011; Ho, 2006; Suen & Yu, 2006).

Terminology Clarification

Wall (1997), McNamara (2000), Hungerland (2004) and Qi's (2005) accounts of test washback and consequences helped me to decide which term, *washback* or *impact or consequence*, to use for this study.

Messick (1989) was the foundational thinker in arguing that we must not only consider the evidential basis of test, but also the consequential basis of tests. With regard to consequences, the first consideration, he argued, should be test interpretation and the value implications we draw from tests. He also argued we must consider the validity implications of test in use, in other words their social consequences.

Washback is distinguished from the broader concept of impact, which denotes a test's effects on the educational system generally, or on society as a whole (Wall, 1997, cited in Qi, 2005, p. 142). Similarly, McNamara (2000, cited in Hungerland, 2004, p. 1) distinguishes test "washback", which operates at the micro level and refers to the effect of tests on teaching and learning in the classroom, from test "impact", which operates at the macro level and refers to the wide influence of tests on the educational system and society. Mousavi's (2009) definition, which states, "the impact of language test refers to behavioural changes that occur in education and

society as a result of test use" (p. 308), conveys the same meaning. On the other hand, consequence is defined as something that happens as a result of a particular action or set of conditions (Longman, 2009). In this thesis, impact and consequence are the appropriate terms to use because the thesis's focus is exploring the impact and/or consequences of the SLC exams on test-takers and the factors responsible for those consequences at the macro level.

Positive Impacts of High-Stakes Tests

According to Minarechová (2012), high-stakes testing has already established a stable base in various countries and has become a natural and ordinary part of student life (Minarechová, 2012, p. 87). Hundreds of research studies have been conducted on this still-controversial topic. According to Amrein and Berliner (2002a), high-stakes tests enjoy popular support because they are believed to raise standards in a state's lowest-achieving schools (p. 9).

In their study, Yu and Suen (2005, p. 25) contend that the most pervasive consequence of high-stakes testing is that educational fever has been maintained throughout China for over 1,400 years. Yu and Suen define exam fever as parents' feverish aspiration and support for their children's educational achievement (Kim, 2004, cited in Yu & Suen, 2005). Further, the authors state that high-stakes testing was even considered a symbol of equity and justice at the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1977 because the National College Entrance Exam (NCEE) replaced the nomination/recommendation system, which had been corrupted with widespread nepotism (Wang, 200, cited in Yu & Suen, p. 25). Yu and Suen argue that because almost all high school students and their families dream of getting a high NCEE score and entering the best national universities, the value of success through exam results has been deeply integrated into Chinese culture.

According to Amrein and Berliner (2002, p. 4), supporters of high-stakes testing argue that students and teachers need such tests to understand what is important to learn and to teach. The authors contend that high-stakes tests motivate students to work harder and learn more in order to do their best and score well. Signorino (2007) found that school principals hold positive attitudes towards high-stakes testing and the publication of their results. Contrary to the opinion of the teachers, the participating principals believed that the public release of test scores helps motivate educators to improve student outcomes (p. 20).

These findings indicate that many authority figures still advocate for the positive aspects of high-stakes testing. Yet there have also been numerous studies exploring many negative consequences of high-stakes tests on stakeholders, curricula, and the entire education system.

Negative Consequences of High-Stakes Tests

Although there are two schools of thought on the consequences of high-stakes testing, recent studies weaken the ground of those who support the practice. As mentioned above, an alarming number of negative consequences of high-stakes tests and their sometimes fatal effects on stakeholders have overshadowed whatever positive consequences there may be. Analysing the consequences of high-stakes tests on the test-takers, Ho (2006) contends:

Findings from the first two cycles of Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) studies in PISA2000 and PISA2003 indicate that high stakes testing makes no significant contribution to academic performance, but instead has significant negative effect on the schooling system, students' lives after school, students' motivation, self-related cognition, and their learning experiences (OECD, 2003; OECD, 2004, cited in Ho, 2006, p. 70).

Ho's research suggests that the test-takers, because of traditional Chinese beliefs that a child cannot attain success without effort and pain associated with examinations, have been working under stressful academic environments in Hong Kong and several other counties that employ a high-stakes testing system. Further, Ho argues:

The focus of high stakes testing may have detrimental impact on students' self-concept and self-efficacy. When students are not under the pressure of high stakes testing, they generally have a high degree of self-efficacy, use deep processing strategies and self-regulation in coping with the learning task, and generally perform better than others (Pintrich et al., 2001 cited in Ho, 2006, p. 80).

Describing its extremely negative consequences in Hong Kong, Ho states that the months of May, June, and July, when most public examinations are held and candidates' results are disclosed, are also the months with the highest rate of documented suicides.

Ho (2006) presents an interesting perspective on the negative impact of high-stakes testing on pedagogy and curriculum. In her concluding remarks, Ho (2006, p. 37) states, "it is not difficult to imagine how the "dog" (the curriculum and pedagogy) has been wagged by its "tail" (high stakes examinations).

Shedding light on the negative consequences of high-stakes tests, Yu and Suen (2005) also describe the many unintended and often serious negative consequences of exam-driven education fever in China. They argue that education fever and these consequences are all manifestations of a more profound driving force of the exams themselves (p. 17). Yu and Suen's research reveals three aspects of high-stake test impact: exam-driven education fever, positive consequences on stakeholders, and negative consequences on test-takers.

In a later article, Suen and Yu (2006) focus on the chronic consequences of high-stakes testing on test-takers. They contend that high-stakes tests result in four problems: 1) a lack of creativity in favor of memorizing and reproducing a model performance, 2) a focus on test-taking skills and tricks instead of learning a course's content, 3) cheating, and 4) a variety of psychological effects. Suen and Yu (2006, p. 58) describe how anxiety caused by preparing for the Keju exams (a major test in China, now discontinued), and the disappointment of poor performance or repeated failure, took a severe psychological toll on candidates, leading to incidents of pathological behavior. They describe effects of failure ranging from mild cases of self-doubt to genuine psychopathologies and, in some cases, suicide or physical violence against others (p. 58). Suen and Yu (2006) explore continuing exam-induced psychological and pathological problems in China, and annual suicides of high school students who had not performed well in the current national college entrance exam. They conclude that Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Singapore also experience exam-induced suicides. In the context of Nepal, Suen and Yu's work is a milestone for education planners, researchers, and educators because it depicts the horrors of high-stakes testing as victimizing Asian students. Their work has been central to theoretical and empirical research in the field.

Madaus and Clarke (2001) conducted a study in the United States focusing on minority students. Madaus and Clarke analyze data from 100 years of tests to present four adverse impacts of high-stakes testing on minority students: 1) tests with high stakes or high standards have no markedly positive effects on teaching and learning; 2) high stakes do not motivate the unmotivated; 3) authentically high stake assessments are not a more equitable way to assess the progress of students who differ in race, culture, native language, or gender; and 4) high stakes testing programs have been shown to increase high school dropout rates, particularly among

minority populations (p. 4). Madaus and Clarke's (2001) research shows that students from low-income families, or those whose first language was not English, or who were students with special needs performed at a significantly lower level than all other students across three subject areas: English, Mathematics, and Science (p. 16). Several other research studies, including Fox and Cheng's (2007) research on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) support Madaus and Clarke's findings. Fox and Cheng (2007) contend that in the high-stakes English language test, students whose first language was not English did not perform as well as those who spoke English as their native language.

Qi's (2005) research findings are also similar to Madaus and Clarke's (2001). She also explores the negative washback of high-stakes tests. Qi (2005) concludes that the drive to gain higher test scores encourages teaching to the test alone as the ultimate goal, which overlooks the long-term goal of teaching and learning (p. 164). Qi (2005) contends that high-stakes tests, powerful as they are, might not be efficient agents for the profound changes that are believed to promote the development of desired knowledge and ability (p. 164).

Sullivan's (2006) study also revealed similar negative consequences of high-stakes tests, but with a focus on the overall teaching and learning environment. Sullivan's (2006) research explored the impact of high-stakes testing on the curriculum, teaching instruction, and the entire learning environment. Of the 722 Virginia teachers, more than 80% of the participants indicated that the state Standards of Learning (SOL) test had impacted their instruction, particularly regarding the content of daily lessons, because the teachers taught only what would be tested (McMillan, Myran & Workman, 1999 cited in Sullivan, 2006, p. 3). Citing McMillan et al. (1999), Sullivan says that a focus on the test rather than the general standards also means that what gets tested gets taught, and what does not get tested may get less attention or may not get

taught at all. These authors contend that students often receive practice drills specifically designed to mirror the state assessments, with the explicit purpose of familiarizing students with the test format, thus enabling them to perform better on the test (Sullivan, 2006). Sullivan's (2006) research shows that the amount of time per week teachers worked with students is related to whether the subject would be tested at that grade level. Summing up his research, Sullivan cites numerous studies supporting the notion that high-stakes testing negatively affects instruction and narrows the curriculum. Unlike Qi, Sullivan's research study uses teachers' and students' accounts to explore the impacts of tests on instruction and curriculum design.

Signorino's (2007) research adds to Sullivan's (2006) findings. Signorino (2007) focuses on the perceptions and impacts of high-stakes tests on key stakeholders: students, teachers, and principals, taking their opinions both before and after testing. Signorino (2007) found that taking high-stakes tests severely affected students: they exhibited emotional effects including stomach aches, headache, crying, vomiting, and fighting during the test. He found that teachers reported substantial pressure from school administration and parents to improve test scores, but complaints ignored the quality of education. Signorino (2007) claims that some teachers admitted to the use of unethical or improper practices in preparing students for the exams (p. 18). Examples include the use of the prior year's test as practice, changing students' answers, extending the time for the test beyond the maximum limit, helping students during testing, and providing practice items from the actual test (Signorino, 2007). The negative consequences of high-stakes testing explored by Saltman and Gabbard (2003) include the narrowing of instruction, weakening of pedagogy, declining innovation, and a shift from student-centered to teacher-centered classrooms. Similarly, Kohn (2000) and Wilde (2004) have explored such negative consequences as unhealthy and unethical competition among teachers, coaching

students during exams, and changing answers on the exam. Wilde's (2000) earlier research also reported student alienation, grade-level retention, and teaching to the test. Teachers may even begin to resent lower-level students in their classes because they might reduce the perceived success of the teacher (Kohn, 2000; Signorino, 2007, p. 9).

Shepard and Dougherty's (1991) study, in which teachers in approximately 100 schools were surveyed with a questionnaire, corroborated the above-mentioned results, uncovering a far greater negative impact of high-stakes testing than positive. The respondents in Shepard and Dougherty's (1991) study reported that high-stakes testing is stressful and boring to teachers and students; assesses students, teachers, and curriculum inaccurately; causes unfair competition among test-takers; and is riddled with cultural bias. Sambonsugi (2011) contends that high-stakes testing policies and the high school exit examinations are harmful to a certain proportion of high school students and raising dropout rates. Fox (2003) examines the ecological context (p. 1) in detecting differences in group performance on a high-stakes test, providing support for Sambonsugi's (2011) position.

Shohamy (1993) describes consequences of the high-stakes tests on stakeholders from a political perspective as a powerful game changer. She presents high-stakes testing as a powerful tool to manipulate the education system, to control curricula, and to impose a particular ideology on students. Further illustrating the power of tests, Shohamy (1993) contends:

Policymakers in central agencies, aware of the authoritative power of tests, use them to manipulate educational systems, to control curricula, and to impose new text-books and new teaching methods. At the school level, principals use tests to drive teachers to teach, and teachers use tests to force students to study.

Kearns' (2011) research explores negative consequences of the OSSLT on marginalized youths. In this study examines the impact of high-stakes, large-scale, standardized literacy testing on youth who have failed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. In his findings, Kearns (2011) states that the effects of OSSLT failure shapes youths' consciousness in unanticipated ways; some youth said their test failure was surprising, while all youth in the study experienced various levels of shame, humiliation, embarrassment, and/or degradation (p. 126).

Having conducted a review of relevant studies from Eastern and Western countries, I suggest that "*test stakes*" may not be the sole factor responsible for the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exams. Rather, I propose that the other factors responsible for the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exams are integrated into the broader socio-cultural construct of Nepal. Sambonsugi's research directly contributed to the formation of this hypothesis as the author discovered a number of responsible factors (e. g., income, culture, socio-economic status, racism, curriculum etc.) for school dropout other than the stakes of tests. I argue that if the test stakes were the only responsible factor for the fatal consequences of the SLC exam results, then the rates of result-induced suicide and suicide attempts would be the same all over the world, which is not the case. The available research studies have reported more suicide attempts in Asian countries than in the Western world as a result of exam failure or unbearable exam pressure (e.g., Ho [2005], Suen & Yu [2006], Yu & Suen [2005], the NHSSP report [2011]).

To conclude this literature review, research focusing on high-stakes tests and their consequences shows that although there are a limited number of positive consequences, such tests risk the victimization of students. The degree and severity of consequences vary across nations, cultures and societies. High-stakes tests may not only impact the stakeholders

negatively, but can also paralyze the curriculum, methodology, and the entire education system (Ho, 2006).

Purpose of the Study

As discussed in Chapter 1, the main purposes of this study are to explore the negative consequences of the SLC exam results; investigate the root cause of the problems; uncover why the policy makers, educationists, administrators, teachers, and guardians fail to address the significant issues; and make suggestions regarding how the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results can be minimized. Noting the devastating consequences of Nepal's SLC exam results in the newspapers and mass media, especially the yearly suicides and suicide attempts, and having reviewed the relevant literature, I developed a number of questions to guide the present study.

Research questions.

- (1) What has made the SLC exam so important?
- (2) What are the negative consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers?
- (3) What issues contribute to the negative consequences and extreme emotional duress (even suicide) for students who fail the SLC exam? Are there any additional issues, other than the stakes of the SLC exam that contribute to students' distress?
- (4) What might minimize the extreme negative impact of the SLC exam results on test-takers? What should be the role of the stakeholders?

Having discussed literature of relevance to the present study, in Chapter 3 I discuss the methods applied in addressing the research questions.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This study mixed qualitative and quantitative research methods to explore the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam in Nepal and the factors that are responsible for those consequences. Mixed methods research is formally defined here as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

This study applied as a sequential explanatory research design, namely QUAL → quan.

'QUAL', in capital letters denotes higher priority or weight; the '→' indicates the sequential phases of the qualitative and quantitative work; 'quan' (in lower case) indicates its lower priority or weight in the research, and suggests its function to triangulate, clarify, extend, or validate the qualitative findings.

In keeping with the research design, the findings and discussion will also be presented in different sections as Phase 1 (QUAL) and Phase 2 (quan).

Phase 1

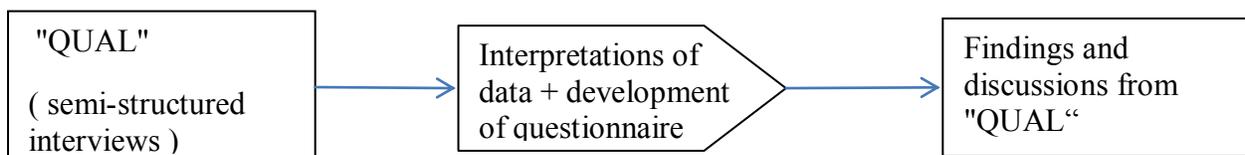


Figure 4. Framework for qualitative data analysis

The first Phase of this research, as shown in Figure 4, collected qualitative data by conducting semi-structured interviews with school principals, teachers, guardians, and students in different settings. Having transcribed and coded the data, a questionnaire was developed based on the emerging themes in the data. The questionnaire was administered to students, and the student responses provided further data for triangulating the Phase 1 findings.

Phase 2

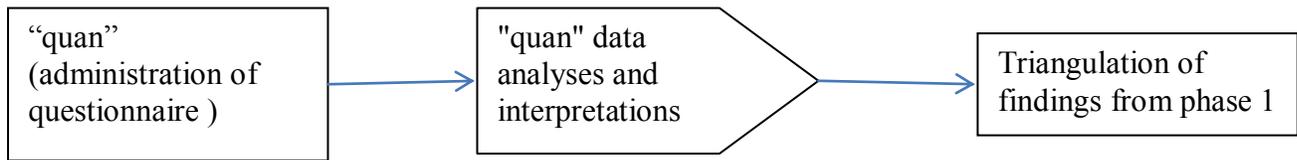


Figure 5. Framework for quantitative data analysis

In the second Phase (Figure 5), for the purpose of triangulating, validating and illustrating the findings from Phase 1, descriptive statistics (frequency tables) and inferential statistics (independent sample t-tests) were analyzed and interpreted. The analyses and interpretations of relationships between two pairs of constructs: 1) parental behaviour and feeling of exam pressure and, 2) an analysis of kinds of stakes (whether it is an academic or a socio-cultural stakes) and feeling of exam pressure via t-tests contributed to triangulating the findings from the qualitative data in depth. The following sections will illustrate both phases in detail.

Triangulation of Findings

As mentioned above, a qualitative method is predominant in exploring the findings of this research. However, the descriptive statistics, particularly opinions of respondents presented in frequency tables, and inferential statistics (independent sample t-tests) were also extensively used to triangulate, validate and illustrate the findings from the qualitative data (Phase 1). The findings from Phase 1 are triangulated, validated and illustrated in Chapter Four under the 'Discussion ' section.

Phase 1: Qualitative Data Collection

Participants in the Study in Phase 1

The reason for selecting four kinds of interviewees - school principals, teachers, guardians and students - was to seek various perspectives and insights from different

stakeholders about the SLC exam and the negative consequences the results have on test-takers. As stated above, the participants of the study include two school principals, two school teachers, two guardians and four Grade 10 students. Brief biographical information about each of the participants is presented below.

School principals. Both participating principals were experienced administrators. One (Principal-1) had 30 years of teaching experience and 16 years of administrative experience. He had been involved with SLC exam takers for about 25 of his 30 years working as an educator. Similarly, the other principal (Principal-2) had a 27-year-long career in education, with more than 15 years of administrative experience. He had been working with SLC exam takers for more than 20 years. Both of the principals described various experiences with the preparation and administration of the SLC exams. Principal-1, in his own words, was declared the best superintendent in Morang district in 2012. Both of them were males who managed and ran public schools in Nepal's Morang district at the time of the study.

Teachers. The participating teachers, both males, represented two different public schools. The first participant (Teacher-1) had 34 years of teaching experience and had been teaching Mathematics to SLC students for about 21 years. The other participant (Teacher-2) was an English teacher with 13 years of experience teaching in both private and public schools. He had been involved with the SLC exam for about eight years. Apart from teaching, both teachers had several years of experience preparing questions for the SLC exams, supervising students writing the SLC exams, and doing other exam-related work. As well as working on the exams themselves, the teachers reported having been involved in special preparations for the SLC exams such as coaching classes, tutoring classes, etc.

Guardians. Two guardians, a male and a female, participated in the study. The female participant (Guardian-1) had two different experiences related to the SLC exams, having taken the exam herself as a youth, also having two children who had passed the SLC exams. The other guardian (Guardian-2) had similar experiences. He reported that after he failed the SLC exam, he was forced to leave his studies and enlist with the Nepalese Army. He had three children who had already taken the SLC exams. Two had passed the SLC exams and the third one was waiting for the results at the time of data collection.

Students. Four students from three different Nepalese public schools participated in the study. All four students were born and raised in the same community. The first student (Student-1) is male, currently in Grade 10, and was preparing for his first attempt at the SLC exam at the time of the interview. The second student (Student-2) is female, and was waiting for the results from her second time writing the SLC exam. Specifically, she had written the '*SLC Chance Exam*,' which is organized two months after the regular exam for those who have failed in one or two of its subjects. If anyone fails more than two subjects, they have to re-take the exam the following year. The third student (Student-3) is a male Grade 10 student, who was also an SLC exam novice. The fourth student (Student-4) is male and also a Grade 10 student at the time of the interview, but was preparing for his third attempt at the SLC exam. He reported that he came back to school after a two year gap, after having left school due to failing the SLC exams twice.

Instruments and Procedures in Phase 1

Three separate sets of questions (e.g., set 1 for teachers and principals, 2 for guardians, and 3 for students) were developed for semi-structured interviews. Following Hungerland (2004, p. 42) the interviews included three types of questions. First, '*background or information questions*' were asked at the initial phase of the interviews to collect participants' foundational

knowledge and experiences of the SLC exams. Second, the participants were asked '*attitude and perceptions questions*' for their insights into different general dimensions of Nepal's SLC exam, for example, the negative consequences they experienced from the exam, and what they suspected were factors responsible for those consequences. Third, '*cross-questions*' were asked during interviews to elicit further relevant information from the participants.

Although a single participant can identify a great variety of relevant factors, the purpose of the current study was to identify common themes among participants, under the assumption that the commonalities would likely represent the most important factors for a researcher to explore (Hungerland 2004, p. 42). It is for this reason ten interviewees (more than one participant representing each category) were included in the study.

All the initial guiding questions used in the semi-structured interviews for the three groups of participants are presented in Appendix 1.

Data collection was an especially challenging task. I was attempting to interview participants who lived in Nepal at the time of data collection without being physically present in the country. Only thanks to contemporary technology was it possible to interview Nepalese participants from my home base in Canada.

Having prepared the interview questions and other ethics-related documents with the assistance of my thesis supervisor and Research Ethics Board coordinator (see Ethics Clearance Certificate in Appendix 2), I sent the following necessary documents via e-mail to four research contacts in Nepal, who were willing to help me collect data as research representatives: my thesis proposal, letters of invitation (see Appendix 3.1), consent forms (see Appendix 3.2), interview questions, and instructions. I selected these four people as my representatives for this purpose because all of them had MA Degrees with plenty of research experiences. Prior to this, I

discussed with them in detail the focus of my research, data collection procedures, and the ethics involved in the study.

My research representatives contacted five principals and seven teachers working in their neighborhood schools to discuss with them the purpose of my research, assure them that the collected data would be confidential, and secure their willingness to participate while making clear their ability to withdraw. The principals and teachers were provided with letters of invitation and asked to contact my representatives if they were interested in participating in the study. Two school principals and two teachers contacted my representatives to participate in the research. Similarly, four interested student participants were recruited through the procedure described above, and with the help of the principals and teachers. The participating students, in turn, helped select two guardians who were recruited in the same manner. The participants were then scheduled to participate in telephone interviews with me which I was able to conduct from Ottawa, Canada.

All ten interviews were conducted one-on-one over the phone in the Nepali language, and recorded on an audio recording device by setting the cell phone to speakerphone mode. Each of the semi-structured audio-recorded telephone interviews was then transcribed. The original transcription was written in Nepali and was separately translated into English. The translations were checked for correctness and accuracy with the help of a group of four English teachers from Nepal presently living in Ottawa, Canada.

Qualitative Data Analysis in Phase 1

The present study used a "*grounded method of analysis*" (cf. Charmaz, 1996; Dornyei, 2007; & Saldaña, 2009) in Phase 1. The term '*grounded*' indicates that new theoretical insights

are to be generated on the basis of the empirical data (Dornyei, 2007, p. 259). Saldaña (2009) states:

The process usually involves meticulous analytic attention by applying specific types of codes to data through a series of cumulative coding cycles that ultimately lead to the development of a theory - a theory 'grounded or rooted' in the original data themselves (p. 42).

This study follows a logical, three-level, system used for coding interview transcripts, also following Charmaz (1996), Dornyei (2007) and Saldaña (2009). Dornyei (2007) describes the method thusly:

First, we break up the data into chunks and assign conceptual categories to the data segments ('open coding'). Second, we identify interrelationships between these categories ('axial coding'). Third, we explain these relationships at a higher level of abstraction ('selective coding') (p. 260).

Data analysis methods include Charmaz's (1996) *line-by-line coding* of each interview transcript in the initial phase, finally followed by *focused coding*. Code categories, such as Descriptive Code, In Vivo Code, Process Code, Lumper Coding (Holistic Coding) etc. by Charmaz (1996) and Saldaña (2009) were used to induce themes and concepts that address the research questions.

Phase 2: Quantitative Data Collection

Participants in the Study in Phase 1

All 150 respondents participating in the quantitative Phase of the research were current Grade 10 students preparing for the SLC exam in three different public schools in Morang and Dhading districts. The respondents filled out the questionnaire during regular class time in the

Nepali language, in the presence of their class teachers and my research representatives.

However, only 100 respondents from Morang district and 50 from Dhading district responded to all the questions in the survey. Six frequency tables were developed (see Appendices 4.1- 4.6) to present demographic information of the participants.

Based on the frequency tables mentioned above, of 150 respondents, 60.7% (n=91, N= 150) of the respondents were female and 39.3% (n=59, N= 150) respondents were male. 86% of the respondents (n=129, N= 150) reported the Nepali language as their mother tongue. Regarding their ethnicity, 52% of respondents (n=78, N= 150) reported '*Mongol*' as their ethnicity. The age of the participants range from 14 to 20 years old, however, 94.6 % of the respondents (n= 142, N= 150) were between 15-19 years old. 43.3 % of the respondents (n= 65, N=150) reported that their mothers were illiterate, and 10 % of the respondents (n= 15, n= 150) reported illiterate fathers.

Instruments and Procedures in Phase 2

The questionnaire (presented in Appendix 5.1) for the quantitative study was prepared with the co-ordination of my thesis supervisor. A three-part structure of the questionnaire was developed to explore students' understanding and perception of the SLC exam and its negative consequences on test-takers. The first part of the questionnaire includes 17 background information questions (questions no. 1- 17) to gather the sample's demographic information. The second part of the questionnaire consists of 26 Likert Scale questions (questions no. 18- 43) on a scale of 1-6, ranging from '*strongly disagree*' to '*strongly agree*'. The main purpose of this part of the questionnaire was to collect students' views on different aspects of the SLC exams, particularly related to negative consequences stemming from their results. The third part of the

questionnaire (question no. 44- 50) includes seven open-ended short-answer questions to collect the viewpoints of respondents on the SLC exam and issues related to its results.

The questionnaire was translated into the Nepali language in order to facilitate comprehension of the questions by the respondents (see Appendix 5.2). The questionnaire was then e-mailed to my thesis representatives in Nepal. They were instructed on how to administer the questionnaire and collect the most accurate data possible. The interested participants were identified using the same procedure as in the qualitative method. Respondents were told to complete the questionnaire according to their own experiences with the SLC exam, and respond to the items as truthfully as possible. The questionnaire was administered in the presence of the schools' teachers and the thesis representatives. Three different tables (see Appendix 6) were developed and sent to the thesis representatives to tabulate the participants' responses. Instructions were provided to all three representatives regarding the marking and tabulation of the responses. In order to check for the reliability and consistency of the tabulation, five sample questionnaires with tabulated results (see Appendix 7) were received from each research representative, and the accuracy of the tabulation was reviewed. In all cases, there were no discrepancies in their tabulation of the data.

Quantitative data Analysis in Phase 2

A quantitative research method by Dornyei (2007) and the statistical software package version 20.0.0.1(IBM SPSS Statistics 20) were used to analyze the results of the quantitative data. Two types of statistic analysis tools- descriptive statistics (frequency tables) and inferential statistics (independent sample t-tests) were used to triangulate the findings from Phase 1.

In this Chapter, the methods used to collect and analyze the data for this study were described. In Chapter 4, which follows, the results of each Phase are presented and discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Discussion

This Chapter presents the results of this two phase study, and discusses them in relation to the overarching issues addressed by this thesis, namely, the impact of the SLC exam on Nepalese students/test takers. Specifically, the thesis addresses these questions:

- (1) What has made the SLC exam so important?
- (2) What are the negative consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers?
- (3) What issues contribute to the negative impact/consequences and extreme emotional duress (up to suicide) for students who fail the SLC exam? Are there any additional issues, other than the stakes of the SLC exam that contribute to students' distress?
- (4) What might minimize the extreme negative impact/consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers? What should be the role of the stakeholders?

As discussed in Chapter 3, the first Phase of this study involved qualitative data analyses of semi-structured interviews which were coded using a grounded theory approach. This was followed by the quantitative phase of the study in which questionnaires were distributed and analyzed. Findings from the quantitative phase of the study informed the interpretation of the Phase 1 results. In other words, descriptive and inferential statistics, such as frequency counts and t-tests from the quantitative phase triangulated the findings in Phase 1.

Given the overall design of the study, I decided to present all of the findings, from Phase 1, the qualitative phase and from Phase 2, the quantitative phase, together. The presentation of findings (over the two phases of the study) is then followed by a discussion section, which examines and interprets the findings in relation to each other.

Results in Phase 1: Qualitative Analysis

Having finished coding the qualitative data and interpreting the resulting patterns and themes in relation to the four research questions, themes (and sub-themes) were categorized in relation to the four research questions.

- (1) Category 1: Importance/ Stakes of the SLC Exam.
- (2) Category 2: Negative Consequences of the SLC Exam Results,
- (3) Category 3: Issues Responsible for the Negative Impact/Consequences of SLC Exam Results,
- (4) Category 4: Minimizing Factors of the Extreme Negative Consequences of SLC Exam Results.

Details of the themes and patterns that were categorized under each of the categories are presented in Appendices 8.1 and 8.2.

The themes and patterns under the four categories mentioned above were further re-arranged under other sub-categories (for example, theme category number 1 was further subdivided into two sub-categories, namely, specific academic stakes and general socio-cultural stakes). The following section presents the categorization and sub-categorization of the themes, sub-themes and patterns.

Category 1: Importance/Stakes of the SLC Exam

As mentioned above, the themes and patterns written under category 1, '*Importance/stakes of the SLC exam*' are further sub-categorized under two sub-headings: (1) specific academic stakes of the SLC exam (e.g., access to jobs, higher education) and (2) general socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exam (e.g., prestige, historical importance). The following table summarizes the categorization of the themes.

Table 3

Categorization of the themes associated with stakes of the SLC exam

Themes associated with category 1: Importance/stakes of the SLC exam	
Specific academic stakes of SLC exam	General socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exam itself
<p>(1) Powerful gate-keeper/Iron gate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A door to higher education (ii) A door to job opportunity (iii) Required for graduation (iv) End of school exam or school leaving exam (v) No alternatives 	<p>(1) Historical importance and influence in society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) National level exam (ii) First official performance measurement exam (iii) Historical value (iv) Mass/Large participatory exam (v) Sense of long-term investment (vi) Top story for hot debates and discussions in the mass media <p>(2) General social value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Failure is equated with illiteracy (ii) Success is equated with individual value to society (iii) Issues of prestige and face

Category 2: Negative Impact/Consequences of the SLC Exam Results

Thirteen themes and patterns related to the theme category 2, "*Negative Impact/Consequences of the SLC Exam Results on Test-takers*" fit under this category. Based on the impact of the SLC exam results on test-takers, the themes were further sub-categorized under the following four sub-themes: (1) long lasting chronic consequences; (2) short and long-term psychological consequences; (3) career related consequences; and, (4) extreme emotional consequences. The following table shows the sub-categorization in detail.

Table 4

Categorization of the themes associated with negative consequences of the SLC exam results

Themes associated with category 2: Negative consequences of the SLC exam results			
Long-lasting chronic consequences	Short and long-term psychological consequences	Career related consequences	Extreme emotional consequences
(i) Cheating tradition (ii) Exam fraud (iii) Parroting learning (iv) Criminal activities (v) Immoral and unethical activities (vi) Regular drug use (vii) Negative perception of education	(i) Depression and mental illnesses (ii) Loss of motivation, confidence and self-esteem	(i) Blue-collar and low paid jobs (ii) Living a miserable life (iii) Working hard in foreign countries (iv) Danger of losing gifts and skills	(i) Suicide (ii) Violent attacks

Category 3: Issues Responsible for the Negative Consequences of the SLC Exam Results

In the attempt to explore, "*Factors that are Responsible for the Extreme Negative Impact/Consequences of the SLC Exam Results*", fifteen themes were identified that fit in this category. The fifteen themes were again sub-categorized under two sub-categories: (1) specific high-stakes factors, (2) general social and cultural factors. The following table shows the categorization.

Table 5

Categorization of the themes associated with issues responsible for the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results

Themes associated with category 3: Issues responsible for the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results	
Issues related to specific academic stakes	Issues related to general socio-cultural stakes
(i) Ending dreams of higher education (ii) Loss of job opportunities (iii) Lack of alternatives	(i) Job-oriented perceptions of Nepalese (ii) Long-term investment in education (iii) Prestige and face (iv) A nightmarish life without SLC (v) Poverty (vi) Role of school administrators, teachers and parents (vii) Role of mass media (viii) Competitiveness and feelings of humiliation (ix) The dimensional structure of Nepalese communities (x) Marriage culture in Nepal (xi) Social value of education (xii) Social stigma as an illiterate

Category 4: Minimizing Factors of the Negative Consequences of SLC Exam Results

Based on coded data, sixteen themes (which are named as factors) under the fourth theme category, *"Minimizing Factors for the Negative Impact/Consequences of the SLC Exam Results"* were identified. The themes are presented in the following tables.

Table 6

Categorization of the themes associated with minimizing issues of the extreme negative consequences of SLC exam results

Themes associated with category 4: Minimizing factors of the extreme negative consequences of SLC exam results
(i) Control over propaganda
(ii) Extending opportunity for higher education to all
(iii) Practical and vocational education to unsuccessful students
(iv) Respectful and responsible home environment
(v) Respectful and responsible school environment
(vi) Friendly behaviour of teachers
(vii) Changing question patterns
(viii) Improvement in the marking system
(ix) Increasing students' choice of subjects and courses
(x) Needs of teachers, parents and students for counseling
(xi) Erasing a scary beast
(xii) Shifting the SLC exam
(xiii) Alternative to SLC exam
(xiv) Minimization of SLC exam's stakes
(xv) Stress management sessions for students
(xvi) Reform of the SLC exam

Having identified categories, themes, and sub-themes through the analysis of the interview data collected in Phase 1, I developed a questionnaire which was administered in Phase 2, drawing on the Phase 1 results for the questionnaire development.

Results in Phase 2: Quantitative Analysis

As stated in Chapter three, the statistical software package IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.0.01 was used to analyse the questionnaire data. Both descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency tables) and inferential statistics (e.g., independent sample t-tests) were used to triangulate the findings from Phase 1.

Descriptive Statistics

As the survey respondents were informed, options 1, 2, and 3 in the Likert scale questionnaire denote *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, and *undecided or neutral*, respectively. In the same way, the respondents were also instructed that Likert scale options 4, 5, and 6 denoted *agree to a great extent*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*, respectively. These responses were re-coded for an overall *positive response* and an *overall negative response*. In total, 17 tables were developed for the purpose of examining the quantitative results. Among the 17 tables, six tables (see Appendices 4.1– 4.6) provide demographic information on the participants reported in Chapter 3 (see participants, p. 34). The remaining 11 tables, which are presented and discussed in the following section, provide useful information for triangulating the findings from Phase 1.

Table 7

Types of stakes that make the SLC exam more important

Important factors for the SLC exam

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic stakes	37	24.7	24.7	24.7
Both academic + socio-cultural stakes	113	75.3	75.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results from Table 7 suggest that social and cultural aspects (i.e., historical importance, value system of education, socio-economic conditions of Nepal, etc.) have been associated with the stakes of the SLC exam. In response to the question “Why do you think the SLC exam is important?,” as Table 7 illustrates, 75.3% (n = 113 where N = 150) of the respondents in the questionnaire stated that the SLC exam had received attention (in some cases more than it deserved) due to both its cultural and social stakes. Only 24.7% (n = 37) of the respondents reported that the SLC exam was important because of its academic stakes.

Table 8

Susceptibility to involvement in crime after failing the SLC exam

Involvement in crime

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	25	16.7	16.7	16.7
2	31	20.7	20.7	37.3
3	44	29.3	29.3	66.7
4	25	16.7	16.7	83.3
5	18	12.0	12.0	95.3
6	7	4.7	4.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Do you think that some who fail the SLC exam are more likely to be involved in criminal activities or use drugs?,” according to Table 8, 16.7% (n = 25) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 12% (n = 18) of the respondents *agreed*, and 4.7% (n = 7) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. Similarly, 16.7% (n = 25) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and 20.7% (n = 31) of the respondents *disagreed*. The remaining 29.3% (n = 44) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral* (see Table 8). With regard to the overall positive response, only 33.33% (n = 50) of the respondents in the questionnaire stated that students who failed the SLC exam were more susceptible to becoming involved in criminal activities.

Table 9

Students' information on suicide or other consequences of the SLC exam

Negative consequences of SLC results

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Suicide	122	81.3	81.3	81.3
Other	28	18.7	18.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “What extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results have you heard about?,” according to Table 9, 81.3% (n = 122) of the respondents reported that they have heard and read news related to suicides connected to SLC exam results. Only 18.7% (n = 28) of the respondents reported consequences other than suicide.

Table 10

Students' views on the association of SLC with prestige

SLC as an issue of prestige

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	.7	.7	.7
2	2	1.3	1.3	2.0
3	2	1.3	1.3	3.3
Valid 4	30	20.0	20.0	23.3
5	47	31.3	31.3	54.7
6	68	45.3	45.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question, “Do you think that the SLC exam is associated with prestige by stakeholders?,” according to Table 10, 20% (n = 30) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 31.3% (n= 47) of the respondents *agreed*, while 45.3% (n = 68) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. Similarly, 0.7% (n = 1) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and 1.3% (n = 2) of the respondents *disagreed*. The remaining 1.3% (n = 2) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral* (see Table 10). Thus, overall, 96.66% (n = 145) of the respondents in the questionnaire reported that prestige is strongly associated with the SLC exam in Nepalese society. This may suggest that there is a relationship between perceived prestige and extreme negative consequences such as suicide.

Table 11

Students' opinions on the relationship between poverty and the negative consequences of the SLC exam

Poverty leads to negative consequences

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	.7	.7	.7
2	6	4.0	4.0	4.7
3	11	7.3	7.3	12.0
Valid 4	47	31.3	31.3	43.3
5	54	36.0	36.0	79.3
6	31	20.7	20.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Is poverty one of the causes of the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam for those who fail the exam?,” according to Table 11, 31.3% (n = 47) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 36% (n = 54) of the respondents *agreed*, and 20.7% (n = 31) of the respondents *strongly agreed*, while 0.7% (n = 1) and 4% (n = 6) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed*, respectively, and 7.3% (n = 11) of the respondents remained *undecided or neutral* with regard to this issue. Overall, 88% (n = 132) of the respondents reported that poverty could be one of the reasons for the negative consequences of the SLC exam results.

Table 12

Role of mass media in the negative consequences of the SLC exam

SLC was overemphasized by mass media

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	.7	.7	.7
2	1	.7	.7	1.3
3	3	2.0	2.0	3.3
Valid 4	21	14.0	14.0	17.3
5	74	49.3	49.3	66.7
6	50	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Has the importance of the SLC exam been magnified unnecessarily by mass media?,” according to Table 12, 14% (n = 21) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 49.3% (n = 47) of the respondents *agreed*, and 33.3% (n = 50) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. Only 0.7% (n = 1) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and the same number of respondents *disagreed*. The remaining 2% (n = 3) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral*. With regard to the overall positive response, 96.66% (n = 145) of the respondents indicated that the mass media unnecessarily highlighted and exaggerated the SLC exam results.

The findings from the following three tables (Tables 13, 14, and 15) suggest other important issues (e.g., the degree of support students are getting from parents, teachers, and school administrators) that may play a significant role in minimizing or maximizing the negative consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers.

Table 13

Family support for participants during SLC exam preparation

Family support for participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
2	7	4.7	4.7	6.0
3	19	12.7	12.7	18.7
Valid 4	46	30.7	30.7	49.3
5	24	16.0	16.0	65.3
6	52	34.7	34.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Are you getting full support and co-operation from your parents to prepare for the SLC exam?,” according to Table 13, 30.7% (n = 46) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 16% (n = 24) of the respondents *agreed*, and 34.7% (n = 52) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. On the other hand, 1.3% (n = 2) and 4.7% (n = 7) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed*, respectively. The remaining 12.7% (n = 19) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral*. Overall, 87% (n = 120) of the questionnaire respondents reported that they were getting full support from their parents (see Table 13).

Table 14

School support for participants during SLC preparation

Support from school

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	31	20.7	20.7	20.7
2	57	38.0	38.0	58.7
3	21	14.0	14.0	72.7
Valid 4	26	17.3	17.3	90.0
5	9	6.0	6.0	96.0
6	6	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Are you getting full support and co-operation from your school administrators and teachers to prepare for the SLC exam?,” according to Table 14, 17.3% (n = 26) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 6% (n = 9) of the respondents *agreed*, and 4% (n = 6) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. On the other hand, 20.7% (n = 31) and 38% (n = 57) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed*, respectively. The remaining 14% (n = 21) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral*. With regard to the overall negative response, interestingly, 72.7% (n = 109) reported that they were not getting full support from their school administrators and teachers to prepare for the SLC exam.

Table 15

Participants' opinions on the friendliness of their teachers

Friendliness of teacher				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	55	36.7	36.7	36.7
2	42	28.0	28.0	64.7
3	29	19.3	19.3	84.0
Valid 4	13	8.7	8.7	92.7
5	9	6.0	6.0	98.7
6	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Are your teachers friendly?,” according to Table 15, 8.7% (n = 13) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 6% (n = 9) of the respondents *agreed*, and 1.3% (n = 2) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. On the other hand, 36.7% (n = 55) and 28% (n = 42) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed*, respectively. The remaining 19.3% (n = 29) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral*. Overall, interestingly, 84% (n = 126) of the respondents reported that their teachers were not friendly.

Table 16

Fairness of the marking system for the SLC exam

Fairness of the marking system

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	65	43.3	43.3	43.3
2	23	15.3	15.3	58.7
3	23	15.3	15.3	74.0
Valid 4	28	18.7	18.7	92.7
5	9	6.0	6.0	98.7
6	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Are answer sheets of the SLC exam marked fairly?,” according to Table 16, 18.7% (n = 26) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 6% (n = 9) of the respondents *agreed*, and 1.3% (n = 2) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. On the other hand, 43.3.7% (n = 65) and 15.3% (n = 23) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed*, respectively. The remaining 15.3% (n = 23) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral*. With regard to the overall negative response, 76% (n = 114) respondents reported that their answer books were not marked fairly and correctly. This means that a large majority of the respondents seemed to be doubtful of the reliability of the marking for their answer books.

Table 17

Alternatives for those who fail the SLC exam

Alternatives to the SLC exam are helpful

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	.7	.7	.7
2	4	2.7	2.7	3.3
3	3	2.0	2.0	5.3
Valid 4	10	6.7	6.7	12.0
5	50	33.3	33.3	45.3
6	82	54.7	54.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In response to the question “Do you think an alternative for those who can't pass the SLC exam is a good idea?,” according to Table 17, 6.7% (n = 10) of the respondents *agreed to a great extent*, 33.3% (n = 50) of the respondents *agreed*, and 54.7% (n = 82) of the respondents *strongly agreed*. On the other hand, 0.7% (n = 1) and 2.7% (n = 4) of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed*, respectively. The remaining 2% (n = 3) of the respondents were *undecided or neutral*. With regard to the overall positive response, 94.66% (n = 142) of the respondents in the questionnaire reported that alternatives (vocational training or education, opportunities for higher education, skill enhancement training, etc.) for those who did not pass the SLC exam might be helpful in deterring the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results.

Inferential Statistics

In order to examine the relationships between the pressure caused by the SLC exam on test-takers and the parents' or guardians positive and negative reactions to exam failures, an independent sample t-test was run in the SPSS data set. The independent sample t-test was also used to test relationships between the kinds of stakes responsible for the extreme negative

consequences of the SLC exam (both academic and socio-cultural stakes) and the SLC exam pressure scores of the test-takers.

Relationships between the SLC exam pressure scores and parent reactions on exam failures. Independent sample t-tests were used to examine whether or not parents' or guardians' positive or negative reactions to exam failures contribute to the increase or decrease of exam related pressure on test-takers. For this purpose, the respondents were asked to describe the reaction of their parents or guardians upon learning that their children had failed the SLC exam. The responses were collected and categorized into positive reaction groups (coded as '1') and negative reaction groups (coded as '2'). The respondents' degree of SLC exam pressure/stress was collected in score forms (i. e. in a Likert scale of 1- 6, where '1' denotes zero stress and '6' denotes the highest degree of stress) by asking whether the students were preparing for the SLC exam under pressure. The independent sample t-test showed the following results.

Table 18.1

Group statistics: Relationships between parents' reaction and SLC exam pressure

Group Statistics					
	Parent reactions to failures	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SLC exam pressure on participants	Positive reaction	32	2.06	.619	.109
	Negative reaction	118	4.76	.813	.075

Group statistics presented in Table 18.1 show that the respondents who reported negative reactions from parents or guardians on exam failures reported a higher degree of SLC exam pressure than those of the respondents who reported positive reactions of parents or guardians on exams failures.

Table 18.2

Independent sample test: Relationships between parents' reaction and SLC exam pressure

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
SLC exam pressure on participants	Equal variances assumed	5.885	.016	-17.448	148	.000	-2.700	.155
	Equal variances not assumed			-20.369	63.146	.000	-2.700	.133

The data from the independent samples test (Table 18.2) show that there was a significant difference in the degree of SLC exam pressure reported by students whose parents were said to have negative reactions to exam failure (M=4.67, SD=.81) and students whose parents were said to have positive reactions to exam failure (M=2.06, SD=.61), $t(148) = 17.44$, $p < 0.05$. The value of eta squared is 0.67, which means that the effect size is large enough to show its strong magnitude (Dornyei, 2007, p. 217).

Relationships between the SLC exam pressure scores and the kinds of responsible factors. An independent sample t-test was run on the SPSS data set to explore whether or not the kinds of stakes- academic stakes or integration of both academic and socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exam the respondents prioritize influence their SLC exam pressure scores. To explore this relationship, the participants' responses were collected by asking what the factors that account for extreme negative consequences of the SLC are. Those responses were divided into two categories- the factors related to academic stakes of the SLC exams (denoted by '1') and the factors related to both academic stakes and socio-cultural stakes (denoted by '2'). The independent sample t-test provided the following results.

Table 19.1

Group statistics: Relationships between kinds of stakes and SLC exam pressure

Group Statistics					
	Factors accounting for bad consequences	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SLC exam pressure on participants	Academic stakes	33	2.09	.631	.110
	Stakes + socio-cultural	117	4.78	.800	.074

Group statistics in Table 19.1 show that the respondents who reported both academic stake and socio-cultural stake factors as causing factors for extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results showed higher SLC exam pressure/stress than those of the respondents who reported only the academic stake factors.

Table 19.2

Independent sample test: Relationships between kinds of stakes and SLC exam pressure

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
SLC exam pressure on participants	Equal variances assumed	4.035	.046	-17.785	148	.000	-2.687	.151
	Equal variances not assumed			-20.299	63.994	.000	-2.687	.132

The independent samples test table (Table 19.2) shows that there was a significant difference in the degree of SLC exam pressure reported by students who listed both academic stakes and socio-cultural factors as causative factors for extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results (M=4.78, SD=.80) and those who listed only academic stake factors (M=2.09, SD=.63), $t(148) = 17.78, p < 0.05$. The value of eta squared is 0.68, which is much greater than 0.14.

Discussion

Discussion of Qualitative Results (Phase 1) with Triangulation from Quantitative (Phase 2)

This section discusses the findings from both phases in relation to the research questions. Specifically, the findings addressed the four research questions guiding this study: (1) What has made the SLC exam so important (2) What are the negative impact/consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers? (3) What issues contribute to the negative impact/consequences and extreme emotional duress (even suicide) for students who fail the SLC exam? Are there any additional issues, other than the stakes of the SLC exam that contribute to students' distress? and, (4) What might minimize the extreme negative impact/consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers? What should be the role of the stakeholders?

Research Question 1

In response to the first research question, *What has made the SLC exam so important?*, the findings suggest the following issues.

Issues Associated with the Importance/Stakes of the SLC Exam

The themes and patterns which emerged from the interview transcripts suggest that the academic, social, and cultural stakes of the SLC exam directly contribute to the exam's importance and the sensationalized public image (see discussion, p. 12). Student responses to the questionnaire strongly support this finding.

Specific academic stakes of the SLC exam. All ten interviewees agreed that Nepal's SLC exam is a high stakes-test that is a major determinant of an individual's academic future. The following factors have made the SLC exam more important and sometimes contribute to its becoming a scary thing.

Powerful gate-keeper/Iron gate.

A door to higher education. The findings suggest that the SLC exam, as mentioned in the literature review, has such high stakes because it opens the door to further studies and academic careers for those who succeed, while limiting future possibilities for those who fail. According to Student-2, “It is a mandatory requirement for the higher education - one has to pass the SLC exam to get admitted into campuses or colleges or any vocational education.” Similarly, Principal-1 says: “If one fails the SLC exam, his/her future will be even darker. He/she cannot even continue further education. The door will be closed for them to grow and develop.”

A door to job opportunity. The interview respondents suggest that the SLC exam certificate is a minimum mandatory requirement for any governmental or private sector jobs. “Nowadays, one has to have the SLC passed certificate even to borrow a rickshaw from any company or owner,” says Student-1. Furthermore, according to Guardian-2, “Someone must pass this exam to get a job in the country or to go to any of the foreign countries. Nowadays, even to find very basic jobs in the military, this exam has become the basic requirement.”

Required for graduation. The findings suggest that in order to receive an SLC graduation certificate, one must pass the SLC exam. It means that the student who fails will be deprived of taking part in the graduation program organized by the school unless he/she passes all subjects in the SLC exam.

End of school exam or school leaving exam. The findings suggest that because the SLC exam occurs at the end of the school year, stakeholders, including test-takers, consider it a great milestone in one’s educational journey. The results also suggest that students think the exam transforms their social status from a secondary school student to an individual bound for higher

education. Principal-2 says, “Students at the end of school start dreaming of a better life, a higher prestige, and more personal freedom in colleges or campus.”

No alternatives. The findings suggest that the lack of alternatives for those students who cannot pass the SLC exam has magnified its importance. Respondents reported that if one fails the SLC exam, there are no life-supporting vocational courses or apprenticeships available, and no way to proceed to an academic career. Principal-2 says, “If they could not pass the SLC exam, their further advancement and dream of a better life would collapse due to the lack of supportive alternatives.”

General socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exam itself. The findings suggest that in addition to the SLC exam’s academic stakes, a number of social and cultural factors also play a role in magnifying its importance. The respondents suggested that the following factors contribute to sensationalizing the SLC exam.

Historical importance and influence in society.

National level exam. The SLC exam is the only national-level exam in Nepal, which is why it receives so much special attention from stakeholders. Principal-2 states, “This is a national exam of Nepal in secondary level.” He continues, “I think that the status of the exam (national exam) has made it more sensationalized.”

First official performance measurement exam. The SLC exam is the only formal and official exam taken simultaneously by all schools nation-wide. It evaluates not only the test-takers' overall performance, but also the performance of the teachers, administration, and schools. Teacher-2 states, “Schools' reputation and its prestige rests on the passed percentage, first division and distinction marks of the SLC students. In many cases, teachers' performance is evaluated based on the SLC exam results.”

Historical value. The findings indicate that the SLC exam was extremely important in past decades because SLC passing candidates were once so few. Even 40-50 years ago, according to Principal-2, a candidate who passed the SLC could easily find a job, be promoted and acquire foreign scholarships. Today, the same attractive image dwells in peoples' minds even though the situation has drastically changed. Principal-2 says, "There was a time, even I can remember, when an SLC passed individual used to be pointed out by finger saying that the person had passed the SLC exam. The person used to be well-known throughout the area."

Mass/Large participatory exam. The SLC exam is Nepal's largest national exam, written by more than half a million students annually, a number which continues to increase each year. Principal-2 says, "As time passed, the number of SLC candidates is rapidly increasing. More than a half million students participated in the SLC exam last year (2012)."

Sense of long-term investment. Almost all the interviewees agree that the SLC exam is widely celebrated throughout the country because it is the time when the Ministry of Education, school administrators, teachers, guardians, and students see the outcome of their shared investment of ten years. Guardian-2 says, "The SLC exam is very important because it is the time to see the return of ten years' labor and investment."

Top story for hot debates and discussions in the mass media. The mass media has overemphasized many facts and issues relating to the SLC exam through repeated dissemination in the news. This study's interviewees suggest that the media's intense focus on SLC exam issues tend to make the exam mysterious, glamorous, and stress-provoking. The mass media runs a series of heated debates and discussions focusing on the SLC exam and its results which span several weeks surrounding the event. Teacher-2 says, "The mass media has highlighted the SLC exam unnecessarily. No other exams get such a high degree of attention. No other exams are

explained, discussed, debated and sensationalized in the way the SLC exam is in mass media.”

Rijal (2013) also confirms the above accounts, describing the media as reinforcing the overblown significance of the SLC exam through intense reporting of its details and results.

General social value.

Failure is equated with illiteracy. The interviewees report that an SLC failure is stigmatized as an illiterate person in the society. Teacher- 2 says, "One who fails the exam is considered to be an illiterate person in the society."

Success is equated with individual value to society. The findings suggest that success in the SLC exam is hugely celebrated in a family as a fest assuming that success in the SLC exam heightens their status in the society. In this regard, Principal- 2 says, "It is believed that success in the SLC exam raises their social status and the society values the individuals as its responsible member.

Issues of prestige and face. The majority of interviewee participants suggest that the SLC exam is culturally associated with the prestige and face of all stakeholders. Apart from the individual test-taker, the school administrators, teachers, and guardians think that a better exam result from their students or children will raise their own reputation and status in the society. Teacher-2 says, “The SLC exam is strongly associated with the prestige and face of teachers, parents and students; it has been developed as a culture.”

75.3% (n = 113 where N = 150) of the respondents in the questionnaire agree that the SLC exam has received attention (in some cases more than it deserved) due to both its cultural and social stakes (Table 7, p. 43).

Research Question 2

In response to the second research question, *What are the negative consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers?*, the findings suggested the following consequences.

Negative Consequences of the SLC Exam Results

The following four themes summarize the findings surrounding the negative consequences on test-takers of the SLC exam and its results.

Long-lasting chronic consequences. The research findings suggest that the high academic and cultural stakes of the SLC exam cause a number of students to suffer long-lasting, chronic consequences. These consequences not only defame the SLC exam itself, but also the entire education system. The findings suggest the following chronic consequences.

Cheating tradition. The interviewees believe that a tradition of cheating has developed in the SLC exam. Some of them contend that even talented students waste hours making slips of paper to cheat instead of reading and trying to understand the content of their courses. Findings suggest that school teachers and parents help students to cheat instead of discouraging them from wrongdoing. Principal-2 says, “In recent years, especially since 1997-1998, some bad activities that defame and degrade the value and reliability of the exam, such as cheating, exam fraud etc., have been practiced by the SLC exam candidates.”

Exam fraud. Findings indicate that a tradition of exam fraud has also developed. Methods of fraud include hiring a third person to write exams for the candidate, bribing exam authorities and personnel, and the use of force to make the exam center amenable for cheating. Teacher-2 says, “Cheating and exam-related fraud have been very common in the SLC exam.”

Parroting learning. Some SLC exam questions require such large amounts of information that one cannot answer them without memorization. As a result, and as the research

findings indicate, memorization has become central to pedagogy, which discourages students' creativity and encourages parroted learning in which students repeat content without truly understanding it. Teacher-2 supports the above notion. "Considering the type of questions, they are asked to memorize formulas and important information, which I think is not a good way of teaching because it kills students' creativity and makes them a good imitator."

Criminal activities. Based on the participants' interviews, it has been suggested that failing the SLC exam can result in students taking up different kinds of criminal activities such as robbery, murder, and illegal trafficking. Teacher-2 says, "I have another friend, who has been involved in criminal activities after he failed the SLC exam. He has been arrested a number of times on the account of robbery, murder, drug and girl trafficking."

The quantitative data, however, do not support this finding. Interestingly, only 33.33% (n= 50) of the respondents in the questionnaire believe that the SLC failures are susceptible to involving themselves in criminal activities (Table 8, p. 43).

Immoral and unethical activities. Findings suggest that the SLC exam encourages a culture of immorality thanks to the involvement of parents and teachers in unethical activities, such as helping their students or children cheat in the exam centers, or forcing superintendents to loosen exam center security to provide the students access to answer sheets. Especially in rural areas, parents and teachers are role models, so immoral behaviour in elders and authorities encourages the same in students. The following incident, shared by Teacher-2, is one example of how parents become involved in immoral and unethical activities during the SLC exam.

The incident took place in 1998 when I was taking the SLC exam. During the exam period, I went to the toilet, which was a temporary toilet made with a short fence at the corner of the playground. When I was in the toilet, one of the guardians threw a stone

covered with cheats (answers of some questions) to me. The guardian wanted me to circulate the answers of some SLC exam questions to the exam hall so that his son/daughter could get it. I don't know how fast the question of the SLC exam was out. But unfortunately, the stone hit my elbow and I fell down. I almost become senseless. I stood up and went to the exam hall and started writing the exam. I felt severe pain in my elbow as it started swelling. Because of increasing pain, I quit the exam of that day and went home. I couldn't get pass marks in that subject and consequently, I failed the SLC exam of that year. What I mean to say by connecting this incident of my life is that parents give so much importance and emphasis to the SLC exam that they don't hesitate to do any illegal and immoral activities in front of their children.

Regular drug use. The participants report that many SLC failures leave their studies and involve themselves with drug use to minimize the anxiety and agony resulting from the exam. Student-4's own experience supports this.

After I failed the SLC exam, I started a job. The job was very hard and low paid. I was panicked due to the tough job. I started searching for a way to get rid of such pain and suffering. Meanwhile some of my friends suggested to me to take drugs to get relief from anxiety. I started taking drugs regularly. Thus, after I failed the SLC exam, I became a drug user. Fortunately, with the help of a relative, I got an opportunity to join Christianity and I was able to get rid of such life-ruining wrong deeds. After I wasted two full years in hell, I came back to the real world and rejoined school. Now I am studying in Grade 10 and preparing for the SLC exam.

Negative perception of education. The results describe several cases of students losing interest in education if they cannot pass the SLC exam after multiple attempts. Principal-1 says,

“Sometimes a sort of negative perception to education may form in their mind if students fail the exam repeatedly.”

Short and long-term psychological consequences. Like the chronic consequences, the research findings suggest the following short-term and long-term psychological consequences of the SLC exam on test-takers.

Depression and mental illnesses. The participants report that repeated or sometimes just a single failure of the SLC exam can cause such severe panic that it results in long-term psychological harm such as depression, hopelessness, helplessness, etc. Student-4 states, “After he got the results, one of my friends was so depressed and mentally shocked that he had to be hospitalized for treatment. Teacher and friends met him and tried to console him. He is still under medication.”

Loss of motivation, confidence and self-esteem. The interviewees express that one extreme negative consequence of an SLC exam failure or unexpectedly poor performance results is a loss of motivation, confidence, and self-esteem, which are the master keys to success. Sometimes they lose these psychological life assets temporarily, and sometimes permanently. Principal-1 says, “After failing the exams, some students may be frustrated by losing motivation, confidence and self-esteem.”

Career-related consequences. The findings suggest that unexpected and poor SLC exam results have several other negative career-related consequences on test-takers.

Blue-collar and low paid jobs. The findings suggest that the lack of alternatives in Nepal for students who fail the SLC exam compel many of them to take low-paying and difficult jobs to support their livelihood. As student-4 says, “If we can't pass the SLC exam, we are compelled to do hard work that requires strong muscles.”

Living a miserable life. Participants' interviews revealed that, apart from some exceptions, people with an education level below a passing SLC grade live miserable lives and most live below the poverty line. Failure in the SLC exam is considered to be a central cause of such negative consequences. Principal-1 says, "I have also seen that some of them (SLC failures) have to go for low paid jobs, which makes their life miserable forever as they always run out of money."

Working hard in foreign countries. The study reports that repeated failure, or in some cases, failure on the first attempt of the SLC exam, results in dropping out of school to become a blue-collar worker in foreign countries. Many interviewees state that in searching for a better life and career, many students who have failed the SLC exam work as general laborers in many parts of the world. Teacher-2 says, "One of my friends, after failing the SLC exam dropped out of school, left home, and went to India. It has been almost 15 years that he has been out of contact with his family members. He hasn't returned to his home yet."

Danger of losing gifts and skills. One important issue raised by the interviewees is that those who cannot pass the SLC exam may have important skills and gifts that may not be realized. The SLC exam is such a powerful gatekeeper that it prevents any skillful and gifted students from going forward to master or enhance their abilities unless they pass all eight SLC exam subjects. The interviewees argue that this mandatory provision puts a number of gifted students in danger. Teacher-1 says, "Many skills and talents in particular sectors have collapsed due to failure in the SLC exam."

Extreme Emotional Consequences. The findings suggest that the most serious emotional consequences of the SLC exam results cause the end of several innocent lives every year, this data is presented in two categories.

Suicide. All the participating interviewees mention that approximately 5-10 SLC exam failures commit suicide every year throughout the country because of a temporary emotional state of mind. Parajuli's (2012) research also supports the above findings. Parajuli (2012) reports:

At least ten young people, mostly girls, have taken their lives over the past three days.

Among the causes, the excessive pressure of the families that bind their own position in society to the success of their children. In 2012, the number of students who failed exams has risen by 10%. Catholic schools are the exception.

Teacher-2 concurs, "I have heard and read many heart touching incidents. Every year 4-5 students commit suicide due to SLC exam failure." As well, Principal-2 says, "I have heard that some of SLC exam failures end their own lives by poisoning, hanging, or drowning in the rivers. This happens every year."

Further, the participants suggest that the actual number of suicides may be higher than what is presented in official figures because many such incidents are not reported and publicized for legal, cultural, and societal reasons. Teacher-2 says, "There are several other unreported and hidden cases of suicide, which people try to hide because of the fear of social stigma associated with suicide cases and inconvenient legal procedure."

According to responses in the questionnaire, 81.3% (n=122) of the respondents reported that they have heard and read news related to suicides which have occurred due to SLC exam results (Table 9, p. 44).

Violent attacks. The respondents report that the SLC exam failures, in some cases, direct such intense emotions toward their parents, teachers, or others that violent attacks may result. The participants report that exam supervisors become the most frequent targets in such cases. Student-4 says:

One of my friends, actually he was not talented, after failing the SLC exam violently attacked a teacher of our neighborhood village. The reason was that the teacher, who was an invigilator in the SLC exam, hadn't allowed him to cheat in the SLC exam.

Luckily, the villagers saved the teacher's life.

Research Question 3

In response to the third research question, *What issues contribute to the negative consequences and extreme emotional duress (even suicide) for students who fail the SLC exam? Are there any additional issues, other than the stakes of the SLC exam that contribute to students' distress?*, the findings suggested the following factors that are responsible for the extreme negative impact of the SLC exam results.

Issues Responsible for the Extreme Negative Consequences of SLC Exam Results

The findings of this study have shown that one of the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam is suicide. The research findings suggest that there is no single factor involving the stakes of the SLC exam which would result in suicidal behavior in test-takers. Instead, a variety of social and cultural factors have contributed to magnify the emotional impacts of the SLC exam results, leading some students to the point of suicide. These factors fall under the following two broad categories:

High-stakes test factors and Social and cultural factors.

High-stakes test factors. The research findings support the conclusions made in my literature review: the stakes of the SLC exam, though not the sole contributor, are clearly an influential factor in student suicides. The findings suggest that the following aspects of those stakes to a great extent are responsible for causing failed students to attempt and commit suicide.

Ending dreams of higher education. All the interview participants agree that the SLC exam is such a powerful gatekeeper that it prevents the exam's failures from joining colleges to pursue higher education. The results suggest that every student who sits for the SLC exam has a dream of a better life and bright future after passing. This is especially so for those who live in villages; many imagine drastic life changes after passing the SLC exam, aspirations that their guardians and teachers magnify. Findings suggest that after failure, a student thinks that their dreams are permanently foreclosed. Principal-2 says, "When their dreams of a better life after the SLC exam (imagined by themselves or evoked by their parents and schools), such as starting higher education, living in cities, going abroad for quality education aren't fulfilled, they see their darker life ahead and commit suicide."

Loss of job opportunities. All interviewees agree that it is natural to dream of a better career in life. However, in the context of Nepal, seeking a better career without passing the SLC exam is almost impossible. The findings conclude that if one cannot pass the SLC exam, a student becomes panicked with visions of a darker future ahead. In Principal-1's words, "When one fails the SLC exam, the wish of having a good career in life seems to be blocked. The failure thinks that his/her dream of a prestigious career has been ruined. Among the failures, the one whose psychology is weak tends to commit suicide."

Lack of alternatives. According to the present education structure of Nepal, the SLC failure can enter neither a vocational program nor a university. Further the results suggest that the SLC exam failures feel humiliated and frustrated because of their poor results, a state that is compounded by their blockage from an academic career. The findings conclude that the lack of alternatives for SLC failures have made the situation even worse. Principal-2 says:

The next important thing is that there is not any alternative way or alternative education for the SLC failures. If they can't pass the SLC exam, their further advancement and dream of a better life would be collapsed. This scenario signifies that the SLC exam is all in all. Thus, the prominent reason behind such suicide cases is the lack of alternative vocational education or alternative education. In other words, this is a root cause of exam result-induced suicides.

Social and cultural factors. In addition to the above factors regarding academic stakes, the findings suggest that the following social and cultural factors are equally or, in some cases, more responsible for magnifying the emotions of the SLC exam failures.

Job-oriented perceptions of Nepalese. The participants' interviews revealed that the main priority of the vast majority of people in Nepal regarding the future of their children is that they find a good job. The findings suggest that every individual wishes that his or her child would study hard and become a doctor, an engineer, a pilot, or some similarly prestigious occupation. One of the guardian interviewees says that they wish their children to become businessmen, managers, skilled workers, or politicians. The participants believe that this kind of job-focused mentality cannot conceive of options other than a college degree to achieve a bright future life. According to the findings, it is believed that competition in the job market requires one to be academically advanced. The participants believe that this situation affects SLC failures because they think that they can achieve nothing in life without passing the exam, and this kind of mentality intensifies their mental agony. Teacher-2 says, "It is because our society is a job-oriented traditional society where everybody wants to make their children a doctor, an engineer, a pilot, a lawyer, etc."

Long-term investment in education. The SLC exam results are considered to be the outcome of a ten-year investment. The interviewees report that students and teachers invest their time and effort, parents invest their money, and school administration and the Ministry of Education invest their resources to get a good result. On the other hand, failing the SLC exam is thought of by stakeholders as a waste of that investment. All ten interviewees agree that the biggest investor in the SLC exam, within a Nepalese context, is the test-takers' family. According to the findings, the failure is, in many cases, severely scolded by his/her investors/parents and he/she regrets wasting their investment. This situation, of course, increases a failed student's mental stress. Teacher-2 says, "Parents take the SLC exam as a ten-year investment. If any student fails the SLC exam, the parent perceives that his/her child has wasted ten years' investment."

Prestige and face. Research findings suggest that matters of prestige and saving face are leading causes of suicide among SLC failures in Nepal. The findings support that a district or school's overall pass rate, as well as the number of students who pass with distinction and first division marks, are believed to raise the reputation of the stakeholders. This means that culturally, academic success is directly associated with the prestige and face of the test-takers, their family members, and their schools. Success in the SLC exam brings great happiness to a family, whereas failure evokes the opposite emotions and results in negative consequences. The following experience, which Teacher-2 shared, of one of his friends' experiences with the SLC exam, strongly supports this fact.

We were living in a joint family. All my four uncles in my family passed the SLC exam in the first division. Our family was well-known in our Village Development Committee for academic performance. I was continuously given pressure for better

results from my family members and school teachers because I was not as talented as my uncles. I was told that I had to pass the SLC exam in the first division in order to save face for my family, specially face of my father because he was a reputable person in the society. As time passed, I wrote the SLC exam, the results were published, but my symbol number was not in the passed list. The results made my father so panicked that he stayed in the house for a couple of days cancelling some meetings. On the other hand, I was scolded and humiliated so mercilessly that I could not eat anything for two days. If there was not that sort of pressure on me before the exam, perhaps I would pass the SLC exam. During exam, the words- "*you must pass the SLC exam in the first division*" were buzzing in my ear. I couldn't concentrate my mind on writing answers. Even today, I remember the repeatedly said sentence- *You cut your father's nose* (defaming father's reputation) in response to the SLC exam results.

Student responses in the questionnaire confirmed the above scenario: 96.66% (n=145) respondents agree that matters of prestige and saving face are associated with the SLC exam results (Table 10, p. 45).

A nightmarish life without SLC. All ten interviewees contend that the SLC exam has been overemphasized throughout their educational career to the extent that the test-takers believe it to be all that matters in life, failure in the exam equating to failure and meaninglessness in life. According to Principal-2, they see their future as dark and terrifying. Further, he suggests that failing the SLC exam might be the greatest shock in one's life. Principal-2 states, "All parents are not educated and wise. Knowingly or unknowingly those parents contribute to the development of such psychology in student's mind that students think that the SLC exam is everything in their life."

Poverty. In a country like Nepal, where about half of the population lives below the poverty line, people who are living a miserable life seek their secure future through education. The findings reveal that once one fails the SLC exam, the conditions of poverty may themselves prevent the possibility of a second attempt. The interviewees believe that rebounding into the heartbreaking conditions of poverty destroys one's motivation, confidence, and self-esteem; as a result, the person thinks it necessary to punish themselves. Guardian-2 says, “The students want to study regularly, but the parents cannot create a good learning environment at home and also cannot provide necessary support, such as tuition and coaching fees due to poverty.”

In deed, 88% (n= 132) of the respondents agree that poverty could be one of the reasons for the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results (Table 11, p. 46).

Role of school administrators, teachers and parents. The public schools of Nepal are rewarded or penalized based on their students' SLC exam results. Every school wants to raise its pass percentage to be rewarded or to remove a previously instituted punishment. So, according to these findings, the administrator of every school threatens students with punishment if they fail the SLC exam. Teacher-2 says, “There are a couple of reasons why school pressures and threatens students for better achievement. Schools' reputations and prestige rests on the passed percentage, first division, and distinction marks of the SLC students. In many cases, teachers' performance is evaluated based on the SLC exam results.”

The findings further suggest that teachers and parents threaten students more often and more severely than the school administrators. Parents usually threaten their children with physical punishment, banishment from their home, interference in their marriage, sending them to a farm house to plough fields, etc. Findings suggest that parents and teachers raise students' ambition regarding the SLC to such a high degree that the student cannot return to normal life in

cases of failure. They want their students and children to think that the SLC is the exam which must not be failed at any cost. In many cases this sort of treatment weakens student mentality and lowers self-esteem and motivation. Moreover, the consequences of such heightened ambition can be fatal when one fails the SLC exam. Guardian-2 says, “Some of the parents threaten their children by saying that they are not allowed to stay at home unless they pass the SLC exam. At that point the failed student thinks that there is no room for him at his home. He might have to clean the dishes in the hotel. He might think that it is better to end his/her life rather than working as a laborer.”

Role of mass media. The mass media of Nepal covers debates and discussions about the SLC exams before and after publication of results, which makes students attach a do or die significance to it. According to findings, the mass media broadcasts the news of exam failures’ suicides with great exaggeration. This kind of frequently heard news may encourage students who are struggling emotionally to think that they can solve their problems through suicide. Principal-2 says, “The mass media makes the SLC exam highly sensationalized giving it more emphasis than it deserves.”

Participants' responses in the questionnaire reflect a similar picture: in terms of the role played by mass media, 96.66% (n= 145) respondents report that the mass media unnecessarily highlights and exaggerates the SLC exam results (Table 12, p. 47).

Competitiveness and feelings of humiliation. The findings suggest that the present educational system of Nepal is competitive because it creates a social space for competition among friends as they seek to secure the rank of first position with the highest marks in their class. Student-2 argues that, as a by-product of socialization, once one fails the SLC exam, one considers oneself to be nothing in comparison to friends who pass it. Being unable to show one’s

face to one's friends, teachers and relatives may lead to thoughts of suicide. Student-2 says, "When I checked my SLC exam results on the cell phone and did not get my symbol number there, I broke out with tears for hours. I didn't like to go out nor eat. I stayed at home for three days; I even did not go down stairs. I knew that some of my competitors, who were weaker than me, passed the SLC exam. That made me more panicked."

The dimensional structure of Nepalese communities. Based on the broader philosophical views of the interviewees, it can be concluded that in a collectivist culture like Nepal's, any success or failure, and pleasure or pain, affects the entire family. Hofstede (2010) and Ting-Toomey's (2004) descriptions of collectivist society provide theoretical background to support this phenomenon. According to Ting-Toomey, in collectivist society, more emphasis is given to the importance of the "We" identity than the "I" identity; the group's rather than the individual's interests; and, the others' face concerns rather than self-face concerns (p. 219). Based on Hofstede and Ting-Toomey's accounts of the social dimension, Nepalese society is a *collectivistic society* where a group's well-being and happiness is more important than an individual's. When any student fails the SLC exam, the person conceives himself as having not fulfilled the dream of their family. The person may think that their actions have compromised the family's prestige and face. Thus, blaming oneself, the person may become so emotional that they may engage in self harm. This view is supported by Student-1's remarks, "Success of a person is taken as success of the whole family. They become victims of self-humiliation if they fail the SLC exam because they think that they could not fulfill the dream of their parents and family; their life is futile."

Marriage culture in Nepal. Arranged marriages are common in Nepalese culture, where parents of both partners finalize their children's union. In some cases, parents threaten their

daughter by suggesting that if she fails the SLC exam, they will organize her marriage without her input. If the threatened student, whose average age is usually 15-16 years, fails the SLC exam, she may lack the courage to do anything to escape her situation except commit suicide. Student-1 says, “In some cases, parents threaten their children (especially girls) saying that the parents will arrange their marriage if they fail the SLC exams. They can't retake the SLC exam. They are compelled to marry in their young age if they fail the exams.”

The findings also reveal another aspect of Nepal's marriage culture that seems to be associated with the factors responsible for suicides occurring as a result of the SLC exam. According to Guardian-2, an SLC exam failure, especially a girl, is unlikely to find an educated and wealthy spouse which could be another factor that can induce the emotional stress leading to suicide. Guardian-2 says, "Failure in the SLC exams prevents girls from getting a handsome, wealthy and educated man for marriage, which is one of the dreams of every girl." Further she says, “One of the amazing things is that it has been an unauthorized license for marriage especially for women.”

Social value of education. The participating interviewees express how deeply rooted Nepalese society is in Eastern philosophy, such as knowledge of Rishimunis. Like other South Asian countries, this culture nurtures a special place for education. This mindset, which serves as a deeply seeded cause of the social rejection of the exam's failures, compounds test-takers' emotionally intense reactions which induce suicidal tendencies. Teacher-2 says, “Parents take it as a matter of their prestige as well. To some extent, parents' perception and understanding of the SLC exam is responsible for such negative consequences of the SLC exam results. It has been a general phenomenon that failing the SLC exam is failure in life.”

Students' responses to the questionnaire confirm the claim made above: 75.3% (n= 113) of respondents reported that the SLC exam is very important due to its perceived social and cultural value (Table 7, p. 43).

Social stigma as an illiterate. The participants report that it is a socially acceptable phenomenon to regard an SLC failure, ironically, as an illiterate person. The interviewees argue that after failing the SLC exam, a person's basic abilities are questioned and his/her personality evaluated negatively; this social perception has the potential to magnify the despair felt by those who fail the exam. Student-3 says, “Such SLC exam failures are said to be illiterate in our society. It is a sign of stupidity.”

The first inferential statistic (independent sample t-test) results (see Tables 18.1 and 18.2, pp. 52-53) reveal one of the remarkable issues related to research question 3 (i. e. theme category 3). Almost all the interviewees reported that parents' wrong treatment of their children, such as scolding, threatening, beating etc. contributes to increase test-takers' exam pressure and intensity of fear that can result in extreme negative consequences. The inferential statistics in the quantitative analysis shows that the participants who reported that their parents react negatively to SLC exam failure express feeling a greater degree of pressure/stress than those of the participants who reported that their parents react positively (consoling, inspiring to work harder than previous etc.) . From these results, it can be concluded that parents' behavior and treatment can play a significant role in reducing or maximizing the SLC exam result-induced negative consequences.

The second inferential statistic (independent sample t-test) results (see Tables 19.1 and 19.2, p. 54) have also addressed the research question of what factors are responsible for the extreme consequences of the SLC exam results. The results show that the respondents, who

reported that both academic stakes and socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exams are the most important factors, expressed a higher degree of SLC exam pressure/stress than those of the participants who reported that academic stakes are the most important factors for heightening the importance of the SLC exams in Nepal. It may mean that the socio-cultural aspect associated with the SLC exam contribute to intensifying the degree of exam pressure on test-takers, which could be an important factor for causing extreme negative consequences, such as suicide. This helps to support the argument that '*test stakes*' (high value) could not be the sole factor responsible for the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results including result-induced suicides.

Research Question 4

In response to the fourth research question, *What might minimize the extreme negative impact/consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers, and what should be the role of the stakeholders?*, the findings suggested the following minimizing factors.

Minimizing Factors for the Extreme Negative Consequences of SLC Exam Results

The findings suggest a number of factors that can help to minimize and/or deter negative consequences of the SLC exam results such as suicide.

Control over propaganda. The research findings suggest that the tradition of propagandizing issues related to the SLC exam in the mass media for weeks before and after should be corrected or controlled because it is directly associated with destabilizing the psychology of teenagers and thereby puts their lives at risk. Principal-1 says, "One of the effective ways of minimizing the SLC exam result-induced suicides is the proper use of mass media. The mass media is such a powerful weapon that it can direct any incidents either in a positive or negative direction."

Extending opportunity for higher education to all. All interviewees report that Nepal's current education system completely blocks SLC exam failures from access to higher education, even if one only fails in a single subject. The negative consequences of failure could be minimized dramatically if all students, regardless of their exam results, were given the opportunity to continue their education somehow. It is also recommended that students who only fail some subjects be allowed to attend college majoring in subjects that they have passed successfully. Principal-2 says:

A provision of non-stop further study/higher education can be managed to those who fail the SLC. The provision should allow them to proceed their further/higher education in those passed and interested subjects. In my opinion, if we are able to remove the pass-fail system of the SLC exam, and barrier to further advancement, this automatically reduces the suicide cases. No fail, no suicide.

Practical and vocational education to unsuccessful students. The findings paint a picture of a horrible future in which more than 50% of every year's SLC exam candidates fail. Therefore, the government of Nepal should target practical, vocational and technical education in such careers as carpentry, raising poultry, or beekeeping, mechanical to those who cannot pass the SLC exams. The interviewees believe that this provides unsuccessful candidates a strong foundation for their livelihoods, hope of a better life, and as a result, would reduce the severe stress and negative consequences of the exam results. In Principal-2's words:

The state is the guardian of its citizens, which has to fulfill every responsibility of its citizens. State and educational institutions can and/or should provide alternative training and education, such as vocational education, some other skillful training- carpentry, poultry, bee farming, etc. to those who can't pass the SLC exam. If the SLC failures see

the other alternatives even after failing the SLC exam; if they find that without passing the SLC exam, they could live a better life, they wouldn't commit suicide.

Principal- 2's view is well-supported by Mathema's (2007) recommendation to the government of Nepal. Mathema (2007) states:

The Government must implement various technical and vocational training programs at different levels for students who drop out after primary or lower secondary or secondary education. Training in practical skills or vocational education should also be considered for boys and girls who fail to complete their schooling or those who have more aptitude toward vocational education (p. 60)

Respectful and responsible home environment. It was found that the family members of examinees can play a pivotal role in reducing stress on their children. The majority of Nepalese parents impart their thoughts and ideologies onto their children, without, however, listening to their children's desires and demands. In many cases, parents seem to behave rudely and irresponsibly to their children. Regarding parents' treatment of their children, Principal-2 says:

Many parents, intending to make their children work harder, threaten their children saying, " it's useless to be alive if you can't pass the SLC exam" or " it is better to die if you can't pass the SLC exam" or " I will banish you from home if you do not pass the SLC exam" or " I will send you to foreign country for hard work if you fail the SLC exam" These are very common quotations that many parents like to use as a weapon to encourage their children to study.

Such treatment quite obviously has the potential to be detrimental to children. In order to minimize suicide rates caused by SLC exam results, the findings suggest that parents should change their behaviour, and the home environment should be loving, caring, and respectful.

In response to a question about whether they are getting full support from their parents, 20% (n= 30) respondents report that they are not getting full support from their parents for the preparation of the SLC exam (Table 13, p. 48). Though the number is small, their feelings ought to be taken into consideration by the proper authorities.

Respectful and responsible school environment. The interviewees expressed that, for many children, school functions as a second home for children because, aside from their family home, they spend the most time there. Good counselling is far more powerful and effective in putting students on the right track than punishment and threats. If school administrators show loving, caring, respectful behaviour instead of punishment and bitter, threatening words, the suicide rate surrounding the SLC exam results are sure to decrease. Research findings suggest that schools should not neglect students, but rather, listen to their voices, and restrain from imposing their ideologies on them. As Student-4 says, “Instead of scolding and threatening students, school administrators have to meet with groups of students or individual students and discuss with them the problems they are facing at home or at school to suggest possible solutions.”

Interestingly, the respondents of the questionnaire responded differently regarding the degree of support they are getting from schools. Surprisingly, 72.7% (n= 109) of the respondents report that they are not getting full support and co-operation from schools for preparing the SLC exam (Table 14, p. 48).

Friendly behaviour of teachers. A significant gap remains between teachers and students in terms of interaction and collaboration. It is believed that a teacher would lose the respect and admiration of students by displaying friendly behaviour toward them. In contrast to this widespread belief, all four student interviewees were adamant that friendly behaviour of teachers for students can minimize suicides resulting from stress over the SLC exam. Student-4 says:

One of my suggestions to teachers is that teachers should be friendly to every student. If teachers are friendly, the panicked students can easily share their problems and sufferings with the teachers like they do with their best friends. Teachers can stop them from committing suicide by using their knowledge and experiences because teachers can give better solutions than friends. Therefore, such cases of suicide can be minimized and deterred if there is a friendly relationship between teachers and students.

It is worthwhile mentioning here that 84% (n= 126) of the respondents in the quantitative data report that teachers are not friendly to their students (Table 15, p. 49).

Changing question patterns. Except for a few grammatical questions in language subjects such as Nepali and English, all the questions in all eight SLC subjects are subjective, open-ended questions that seek long answers. A central problem of such styles of questions is that different markers will grade a question very differently. Teacher-2 says, “Teachers’ personal perspective and knowledge play a very significant role in providing marks. In the answer sheet correction training, the same answer sheet was photocopied and provided to thirty- six teachers. The highest difference between two tough and liberal markers was 31.”

If this style of question is replaced by more objective types, markers will have the ability to evaluate students more justly, and without discrimination. It is believed that objective

questions will improve a student's ability to predict their exam results and so let students mentally prepare themselves to accept their final result. Teacher- 1 says, "The students, who fail the SLC exam in spite of their ability and good knowledge in subject matter, might be panicked more severely than those of the weaker ones. It is because the talented students might not be mentally prepared to face the bad results, whereas weak students might be."

Improvement in the marking system. The practice of using answer books as a marking system for the SLC exam is a topic of much debate and controversy. Many students are believed to have been victims of marking negligence. Teacher-2 describes two kinds of weaknesses regarding the exam's marking system: negligence and a lack of marking training. Teacher-2 says, "Students' answer sheets are checked hurriedly in order for the marker to make a good pay cheque each day that prevents the teachers from fair evaluation. And many markers are novices and untrained." It is suggested that improving the marking system can raise the pass percentage of the students and help to reduce the rate of SLC exam result-induced suicides.

With regard to the reliability of the answer book marking system, 76% (n= 114) of the respondents agree that their answer books are not marked fairly or correctly (Table 16, p. 50).

Increasing students' choice of subjects and courses. According to Nepal's current school regulations, six subjects are compulsory and two are optional in Grade 10, a choice the interviewees consider extremely limited. Not all schools even allow a choice of options because they lack teachers in certain subjects. It is suggested that if schools relax their compulsory subject requirements and offer enough choices to accommodate the diversity of student interest and expertise, then this will increase the SLC exam's pass percentage. The interviewees insist that this would contribute to reducing anxiety about exam results among test-takers. In this regard, Teacher-2 says, "The existing school education system of Nepal compels students to

choose courses which students may not like. They have to pass all eight subjects regardless of their interests and expertise. It hasn't done justice to thousands of Nepalese students.” Similarly, Student-4 says, “All the courses in schools are not interesting for all. But everybody has to study and pass all courses in the SLC exam. If somebody wants to be a statistician, why should he be compelled to study Nepali literature?”

Needs of teachers, parents and students for counseling. It is difficult to say who among the three sets of stakeholders - teachers, parents, or students – hold more responsibility for the suicides that SLC exam results induce, and where the root cause of the problem lies. The findings suggest that all stakeholders, including school administrators, and policy makers, are responsible for these fatal consequences. Teachers and parents must be provided with intensive training on how to behave around sensitive students at school and at home. As well, the students should be counseled to reduce exam related anxiety and emotional distress. Student-4 says, “School teachers don't seem to have taken any counseling training for stress management. And definitely parents have to be educated enough to understand their children's problems.”

Erasing 'a scary beast'. All interviewees agree that the SLC exam has been made into *a scary beast* for the test-takers, an image that produces anxiety in test-takers before, during, and after the exam. As defined in Chapter one, *a scary beast* is a well-known phrase used in Nepalese society to denote an unknown terrifying creature, called *Haunguji* in Nepali language. The findings suggest that test-takers become so overcome with fear of the SLC exam that they cannot even reproduce what they have actually learned. It is also suggested that if students can write the SLC exam without intense fear, the pass percentage will increase and panic among students will decrease. Guardian- 2 says:

I think parents, teachers and school administrators can play an important role to make the SLC exam easy. The SLC exam has been made *a scary monster (Haunguji)* by parents, teachers, school administration and mass media, which makes test-takers nervous.

Shifting the SLC exam. Universities in Western countries like the United States and Canada, do not accept the SLC exam certificate as the equivalent of a high school diploma because secondary school in those countries continues until Grade 12. Principal-1 describes a possible solution.

If the SLC Board Exam is shifted from Grade 10 to Grade 12, I think it will help to reduce the severity of the negative consequences of the SLC exam result. I believe that older students (two years older if the exam shifts to Grade 12) have more stress tolerance than younger ones.

The rationale behind this suggestion is that the test-takers will be two years more mature which may help them to tolerate exam-related anxiety and stress.

Alternative to SLC exam. The findings suggest that an alternative to the SLC exam could contribute to minimizing its negative consequences such as the related suicide rate. One alternative that the findings suggest is replacing the national SLC exam with a local exam like those being taken in lower grades. Student-2 says, “In my opinion, if the SLC exam is locally organized by schools like the other lower grade exams, it will definitely reduce suicide rates.”

In response to a question asking whether alternatives to the SLC exam might be helpful in deterring the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results, like suicides, 94.66% (n=142) of questionnaire respondents answered positively- they fully agreed (Table 17, p. 51).

Minimization of SLC exam’s stakes. The interviewee participants reported that the SLC certificate is, despite its lack of value internationally, one of the basic and essential educational

requirements in Nepal. It is interesting to see what all four student interviewees say in regard to its stakes. Student-1 says, “Nowadays, one has to have the SLC passed certificate even to get a driving license and to borrow a rickshaw from any company.” Student-2 says, “The certificate of the SLC exam is essential for any kind of governmental positions, even for a low-paid governmental job.” Student-3 says, “In Nepal, one has to have the SLC passed certificate to apply to any small jobs, even to have any license.” Student-4 says, “Passing the SLC exam creates an opportunity to get easier and high-paying jobs. It helps to raise our prestige in the society.”

The findings clearly suggest that minimizing the stakes of the SLC exam would reduce the severity of its negative consequences.

Stress management sessions for students. The research findings suggest that because the suicide rate related to the SLC exam results increases every year, there is an urgent need for stress management sessions and workshops available for students. If students are trained to deal with their emotions and stress through such workshops, cases of suicide may decrease.

According to Principal-1:

In one of the workshops related to the SLC exams organized by the District Education Office in Morang district, one of my colleagues proposed to the District Education Officer that the concerned authority has to organize effective stress management training to school teachers so that they can use the knowledge to teach students about how to manage or cope with the stressful situations. He added that this might contribute to reducing the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam results.

Reformation of the SLC exam. Research findings suggest that the SLC exam is no longer required for grade ten because secondary school education in many countries including

Nepal now ends at grade twelve. From a global perspective, eliminating the SLC exam is a reasonable option, and could be quite effective in deterring or minimizing related suicides as a result of to the exam. As Teacher-1 says:

The SLC exam, which is taken at the end of Grade 10, is not an end of school examination. In fact, in many countries around the world, the certificate of the SLC exam neither helps to get any good job nor it is equivalent to high-school education. So, I argue that the SLC exam should be removed from the school system in order to make students stress free.

In reality, the suggestions arising from consideration of the participants' responses to the SLC exam may not be immediately feasible (or effective) in minimizing its negative impact. However, stress management sessions for students, counseling for teachers and parents, practical and vocational training for unsuccessful students, and alternatives in higher education for unsuccessful students would clearly be positive steps in minimizing the negatives consequences of the SLC exam results.

The following Chapter (Chapter five) concludes by providing a brief overview of the study, and its implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations. Finally, suggestions for future research are identified.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

As described in Chapter 2, the principal purpose of this study was to explore: (1) factors that contribute to make the SLC exam more important, (2) negative consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers, (3) factors responsible for the extreme negative consequences of SLC exam results, and (4) minimizing factors of the extreme negative consequences of SLC exam results. The research findings suggest that the stakes of the SLC exam are not the only factor responsible for having magnified its importance and concomitant negative consequences. The findings revealed that besides the stakes of the SLC exam, socio-cultural factors of Nepalese society have also played a large role in yielding negative consequences. This implies that there is always an appended interrelationship between the socio-cultural context and educational system of a society.

This study also explored four types of negative consequences of the SLC exam results: 1) long-lasting chronic consequences, 2) short and long-term psychological consequences, 3) career related consequences, and 4) extreme negative consequences. The study also investigated several academic factors such as ending dreams of higher education, loss of job opportunity etc., and historical and socio-cultural factors (e.g., social stigma, the role of mass media, issues of face and prestige, the role of parents, teachers etc.) that also contribute to the exam's negative consequences

This study also discussed suggestions arising from the data that might minimize the impact and negative consequences of the SLC exam (e.g., practical and vocational education for unsuccessful students, alternatives to the SLC exam, etc.).

Implications

On the stakes of the SLC exam. The first research question which I attempted to answer was ‘*What has made the SLC exam so important?*’ The qualitative research uncovered a number of institutional, social, and cultural factors that contribute to elevating the stakes of the SLC exam. As stated in the introduction and literature review, several studies (Mathema & Bista, 2006; Bhatta, 2006 & Gyawali, 2013) have explored how the stakes of the SLC exam have added to its perceived importance. However, it seems there has been little research exploring factors beyond the exam’s stakes, as this study has. Although the findings of this study revealed the factors that have magnified the importance of the SLC exam, it did not explore its importance from a policy making perspective. Some research studies including Shohamy's (1996) have discussed the ways in which the power and authority of high-stakes tests are used to manipulate the educational system and covertly implement policy. It is perhaps for this reason that high-stakes tests receive excessive focus and attention from the authorities. In this regard, Shohamy (1996) writes:

The power and authority of tests enable policymakers to use them as effective tools for controlling educational systems and prescribing the behavior of those who are affected by their results: administrators, teachers, and students. This phenomenon can be observed in a variety of settings and contexts. Policy makers in central agencies, aware of the authoritative power of tests, use them to manipulate educational systems, to control curricula, and to impose new text-books and new teaching methods (p. 5).

My study did not suggest any indications of whether or not the authorities and policy makers are manipulating the SLC exam for any specific purpose. Rather, I argue that the public role of

power and authority may contribute to illegitimately magnifying the importance of the SLC exam.

In addition, on the basis of the data in this study, I cannot say whether similar grade exam systems in other countries, including the SAARC countries discussed in Chapter one, have any role in magnifying the importance of the SLC exam in Nepal. I think these factors should be explored in detail in future research.

On the negative consequences of the SLC exam. The second of my four research questions was ‘*What are the negative consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers?*’ The present study has explored a number of chronic, educational, career-related, psychological, and emotional effects of the SLC exam on test-takers, some of which are quite alarming. However, unexpectedly poor SLC exam results might not be the sole factor responsible for such threatening consequences. A number of socio-economic and cultural factors, which are the foundation of students’ family and school environments, may be associated with such dire consequences. Although the findings did not explicitly mention political and genetic factors, I contend that they play a significant role in inducing extreme negative consequences. I believe that it is not adequate to conclude that the SLC exam alone is responsible for its extreme negative consequences.

On factors contributing to negative consequences. The third research question was, ‘*What factors contribute to the negative consequences and extreme emotional duress (even suicide) for students who fail the SLC?, and are there any additional factors, other than the stakes of the SLC exam that contribute to students' distress?*’ The findings of this study uncover a number of institutional, social, and cultural factors that are responsible for the suicides that SLC exam results induce. However, composing this thesis, I realized that I had neglected to

discuss with my subjects the involvement of genetics in suicidal tendencies. Hereditary aspects of suicidal tendencies were not discussed in the interviews, and these might also play a role in suicide cases.

On minimizing factors. The fourth research question was ‘*What might minimize the extreme negative impact/consequences of the SLC exam results on test-takers, and what should be the role of the stakeholders?*’ The research concludes by recommending several possible steps that parents, teachers, school administrators, policy makers, and the Ministry of Education must take. Based on the study’s findings and due to the complexity of this problem, there is no obvious or simple answer as to which factors are the most powerful deterrents of suicides and other extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam. Several factors I have identified are interrelated or overlap. Some recommended suggestions are less complicated (e.g., local implementation), whereas others require change in national policy. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that even implementing just a couple of possible recommendations, such as stress management sessions for students, more effective counseling, and providing more supportive and respectful home and school environments would reduce the exam’s negative consequences.

Limitations of the Study

There were a number of limitations to this study. First, both qualitative and quantitative data collection took place during my physical absence from Nepal, preventing me from viewing the interviewees and respondents to the questionnaire. I suspect that further information could have been collected had I had the opportunity to observe their facial expressions and gestures. Based on these observations, I could have made field notes during interviews and used them while interpreting the data. Second, the sample population in both qualitative and quantitative data could not cover a broad range of public schools as the sample population was taken from

three schools of only two (out of 75) districts of Nepal. Third, this study lacks the opinions of experts, educators, and educational authorities (above school administrators) who might have directly contributed to this study. Fourth, this study may contain some errors related to the translation from Nepali to English; this may have altered original meanings intended by the interviewees due to a lack of equivalent wording or terminology. Fifth, the study excluded the views of students from private schools who cover a large proportion of the school level educational population and write the same SLC exam as public school students. I think they could have made a valuable contribution regarding the importance of SLC exams and exam pressure on test-takers, as their education requires a substantial financial investment from their families. One can assume that the expectations for success increase with the size of investment. Sixth, the data were collected from a general sample of the population without targeting any particular group of stakeholders. Those who have suffered severely or experienced great anxiety as a result of the SLC exam, such as students who have endured multiple SLC failures or students who have attempted suicide due to exam failure, would likely have contributed significantly to the finding of this study. Finally, in some cases I had to rely on newspaper articles and online sources due to a lack of academic literature such as research articles and publications.

Recommendations

With the limitations discussed above, in this section, I outline specific recommendations suggested by the findings of this research study to minimize the negative consequences of the SLC exam. As discussed above, in spite of its devastating negative consequences, the elimination of the SLC exam system from Grade 10 may not be possible at the present time. It will be necessary to work for change within what Rogan and Grayson (2003) refer to as the Zone of

Feasible Innovation (ZFI). They argue that educational systems in developing countries may not have the capacity to introduce and sustain deep change; therefore innovation should not exceed current practice by too large a gap between existing practice and the demands of the innovation. Although the notion of ZFI was applied by Rogan and Grayson in the context of an implementation of curriculum innovation, I think it is a useful idea in consideration of the reform of the existing SLC exam system of Nepal. Based on the notion of ZFI, the following steps could be taken during the first phase in reformation of the current SLC exam system. These steps might begin to minimize the SLC exam result-induced negative consequences.

(1) The SLC exam should be conducted locally by the respective schools on their own schedules so that stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, administrators, guardians etc.) may consider the SLC exam like other grade exams. Furthermore, results may not be propagandized and overemphasized by the national media as the SLC exams, in this situation, become issues of more local concerns than national. I believe that discussions and debates pertaining to the SLC exam results may be limited locally, and this may help to lower socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exam to some extent.

(2) The opportunity for higher education should be provided to those who could not pass the SLC exam by allowing them to continue their academic or vocational education in their area of expertise. The area of their expertise can be determined by the marks obtained in the courses they have passed in the SLC exam. This will likely help to reduce the academic and socio-cultural stakes of the SLC exam.

(3) Given that the elimination of the SLC exam is not an immediate possibility, the exam should be conducted at the end of Grade 12 so that the SLC examinees will be two years more mature than the current Grade 10 test-takers. Psychologists (e.g., McNeely & Blanchard, 2009) suggest

that late teens are not as sensitive and emotional as early and mid-teens in terms of reacting to stressors.

(4) The modern notion of evaluation, '*assessment for learning*', should be implemented in the exam system of Nepal. At the present time, the emphasis is entirely on summative assessment; more formative assessment needs to be encouraged in order to support learning and minimize negative consequences.

(5) Multiple assessment systems should be implemented instead of a single one. Other internal evaluation systems, such as internal marking for classroom activities, individual project work, etc. should be used. This could help to increase the pass percentage and lessen the number of students who experience panic because of the SLC exam.

(6) An in depth study needs to be conducted in order to explore better alternatives to the SLC exam (see additional discussion below).

I believe that the above recommendations may help to reduce the negative consequences caused by the SLC exam results, including suicides, and help to establish a foundation for the elimination of the so called '*iron gate*'.

Further Research

In spite of the limitations mentioned above, the present study has explored some important issues and concerns, and made suggestions concerning the SLC exam and how to minimize its negative impact, especially on test-takers. However, this study also indicates a need for more empirical research in this area that can further investigate other underlying issues and concerns that have been raised, but not addressed by the present work. Much more research is required to understand the dynamics of negative consequences. Further, other possible sources of data need to be identified. For example, it may be very useful to analyze suicide notes, as

researchers in North America (Shneidman & Farberow, 1956; Shneidman, 1985 & Leenaars, 1988) are doing in order to better understand contributing factors. Finally, there is a need for an empirical study concerning the life-supportive alternatives for those students who cannot pass the SLC exam. Some of these alternatives suggested in the above recommendations might guide the concerned authorities to more actively minimize and/or deter the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Guiding Semi-structured Interview Questions

(A) School Principals and Teachers (प्रधानाध्यापक र शिक्षक)

- (1) How long have you worked in education?
(हजुरले शिक्षाक्षेत्रमा काम गर्न शुरुगर्नु भएको कति भयो?)
- (2) What is your experience with the SLC exam as a teacher or/and an administrator?
(शिक्षक वा प्रशासकको रूपमा SLC सम्बन्धि हजुरको अनुभव बताई दिनुहुन्छ कि ?)
- (3) What roles are you playing for the SLC exam at present?
(हाल SLC परिक्षामा तपाईंको कस्तो भूमिका रहेको छ?)
- (4) How important is the SLC exam? Why?
(SLC परीक्षाको महत्व बारेमा प्रकाश पारिदिनुहोस्न I)
- (5) Have you had any memorable experiences with students who passed the SLC?
(तपाईंसंग SLC पास गरेका बिद्यार्थी सम्बन्धि कुनै स्मरणयोग्य अनुभवहरु छन्?)
- (6) Have you had any memorable experiences with students who failed the SLC?
(तपाईंसंग SLC फेल गरेका बिद्यार्थी सम्बन्धि कुनै स्मरणयोग्य अनुभवहरु छन्?)
- (7) What is your opinion on the impact of the SLC on student learning on Nepalese society?
(तपाईंको बिचारमा नेपालको सामाजिक परिबेशमा SLC परीक्षाको बिद्यार्थी शिक्षणमा कस्तो प्रभाव छ?)

(B) Parents (अभिभावक)

- (1) What do you know about the SLC exam?
(SLC परीक्षा सम्बन्धि के जानकारी छ, बताइदिनु हुन्छ कि ?)
- (2) How important is it? Why?
(यो परीक्षा कत्तिको महत्वपूर्ण छ ? र किन?)
- (3) Could you share some of your own experiences with about the SLC exam?
(तपाईंको आफ्नै SLC परीक्षा सम्बन्धि कुनै अनुभव भए सुनाईदिनु होस्न I)
- (4) Did/do you help your son/daughter prepare for the SLC exam? If yes, how?
(तपाईंले आफ्नो छोरा वा छोरीलाई SLC परीक्षाको तयारीको लागि सहयोग गर्नुभएको छ? यदि गर्नुभएको छ भने, कसरी ?)
- (5) Did/will you pay any special attention to your son/daughter just before publication of the SLC exam result?
(SLC परीक्षाको नतिजा प्रकाशन हुनुभन्दा ठिक अगाडी आफ्नो छोरा वा छोरीको बिशेष ख्याल गर्नुभएको थियो/ गर्नुहुन्छ ?)

(C) Pre-test Students and Post-test Students (परीक्षा दिने र दिईसकेका बिद्यार्थी)

- (1) How are you preparing [did you prepare]for your upcoming SLC exam?
(SLC परिक्षाको तयारी कसरी गर्नुभएको थियो?/गरिरहनु भएकोछ?)
- (2) What is your view of the SLC exam? Do you think it is important?
(SLC परिक्षाप्रति तपाईंको धारणा के छ? तपाईंलाई के यो परिक्षा महत्वपूर्ण छ जस्तो लाग्छ?)
- (3) Will you [Did you] share your results with others? Who?
(के तपाईं/तपाईंले SLC परिक्षाको नतिजा कसैलाई भन्नुहुन्छ/भन्नुभयो? कसलाई ?)
- (4) Have you ever felt sad or depressed because of a bad exam result? What did you do to overcome that situation?
(के तपाईं असफल परिक्षाको नतिजाको कारण कहिल्लै अत्यन्त निराश हुनुभएको छ? त्यस्तो परिस्थितिमा आफुलाई कसरी समाल्नु भयो त ?)
- (5) What good and bad stories have you heard about the SLC exam result?
(SLC परिक्षाको सफलता र असफलता सम्बन्धि के कस्ता रोचक वा दुखद समचारहरु सुन्नु भएको छ?)
- (6) What should be the role of the stakeholders - school administration, teachers, parents, other students- in helping SLC test takers like you?
(तपाईं जस्ता SLC का परीक्षार्थीहरु लाई सहयोग गर्न SLC परिक्षा सम्बन्धि सरोकारवालाहरु जस्तै बिद्यालय प्रशासन, शिक्षक, अभिभावक, अरु बिद्यार्थीको कस्तो भूमिका हुनुपर्छ?)

Appendix 2 Ethics Clearance Certificate



Carleton University Research Office
Research Ethics Board
1325 Dunton Tower
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6 Canada
Tel: 613-520-2517
ethics@carleton.ca

Ethics Clearance Form

This is to certify that the Carleton University Research Ethics Board has examined the application for ethical clearance. The REB found the research project to meet appropriate ethical standards as outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 2nd edition* and, the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research*.

New clearance

Renewal of original clearance

Original date of clearance:

Date of clearance	11 October 2013
Researcher	Yogendra Bhattarai, Master's student
Department	School of Linguistics and Language Studies
Supervisor	Prof. Janna Fox, School of Linguistics and Language Studies
Project Number	14-0397
Title of project	The Leaving School Certificate Exam of Nepal: Impact and Consequences

Clearance expires: **31 May 2014**

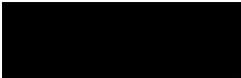
All researchers are governed by the following conditions:

Annual Status Report: You are required to submit an Annual Status Report to either renew clearance or close the file. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the immediate suspension of the project. Funded projects will have accounts suspended until the report is submitted and approved.

Changes to the project: Any changes to the project must be submitted to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board for approval. All changes must be approved prior to the continuance of the research.

Adverse events: Should any participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board. You must submit a written record of the event and indicate what steps you have taken to resolve the situation.

Suspension or termination of clearance: Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 2nd edition* and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research* may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.


Andy Adler, Chair
Carleton University Research Ethics Board


Louise Heslop, Vice-Chair
Carleton University Research Ethics Board

Appendix 3
Letter of Invitation and Consent Form
Appendix 3.1
Sample Letter of Invitation Letter

The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Exam of Nepal: Negative Consequences

Date of ethics clearance: June 21, 2013

Expire date for ethics clearance: May 31, 2014

Dear Sir/ Madam/ student,

I, Yogendra Bhattarai, a researcher in the department of Applied Linguistics and Discourse at Carleton University, am currently conducting a research study under the supervision of Professor Janna Fox, which is exploring the impact of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Exam of Nepal. The main purpose of this study is to explore the factors that contribute to negative consequences of the results of the School Leaving Certificate Examination (commonly known as SLC exam) of Nepal.

As you are one of the main stakeholders of the SLC exam, your participation is critical to the success of the study. If you wish to participate in this study, you need to provide me about 40-45 minutes to an hour for the interview/or for completing the questionnaire. The interview will be conducted in either Nepali or English, according to your preference or comfort. The interview will either be videotaped or audio recorded whichever you prefer.

For interview participants

In the interview, I will ask you a series of questions about the SLC exam (the questions are attached to this letter). During the interview, you can ask me any question/s you like, and if you feel uncomfortable answering any question/s for any reason, you can simply not answer that question. You have the right to withdraw your participation even after completion of the interview (if you feel uncomfortable) **within 15 days**. After completion of the thesis defense, all the data will be erased/destroyed.

For students filling in the questionnaire

Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, you have the right to leave them blank. If you have any questions, the researcher will answer them.

So far as your privacy and confidentiality is concerned, I will assure you that your participation will remain confidential (please do not provide your name in responding to the questionnaire). The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential within access of the researcher and the supervisor only. **And the data will be stored in a password protected computer.** A summary of findings of the research will be sent to you by mail/e-mail upon request

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board at Carleton University.

For further information about the research study and other concerned matters, please contact:

Appendix 3.2
Sample of Consent Form
The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Exam of Nepal: Negative Consequences

Date of ethics clearance: June 21, 2013

Expire date for ethics clearance: May 31, 2014

I,....., volunteer to participate in this research study, which is exploring the factors that contribute to negative consequences of the results of the School Leaving Certificate Exam (commonly known as SLC exam) of Nepal. I knew that the researcher, Yogendra Bhattarai (I know him after getting the invitation letter) aims to collect information from me for the purpose of his present research study. The researcher has provided me with the following information about the research project.

As you are one of the main stakeholders of the SLC examination, your participation is critical to the success of the study. If you wish to participate in this study, you need to provide me about 40-45 minutes to an hour for the interview/or for completing the questionnaire. The interview will be conducted in either Nepali or English, according to your preference or comfort. The interview will either be videotaped or audio recorded whichever you prefer.

For interview participants

In the interview, I will ask you a series of questions about the SLC exam (the questions are attached to this letter). During the interview, you can ask me any question/s you like, and if you feel uncomfortable answering any question/s for any reason, you can simply not answer that question. You have the right to withdraw your participation even after completion of the interview (if you feel uncomfortable) **within 15 days**. After completion of the thesis defense, all the data will be erased/destroyed.

For students filling in the questionnaire

Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, you have the right to leave them blank. If you have any questions, the researcher will answer them.

So far as your privacy and confidentiality is concerned, I will assure you that your participation will remain confidential (please do not provide your name in responding to the questionnaire). The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential within access of the researcher and the supervisor only. **And the data will be stored in a password protected computer.** A summary of findings of the research will be sent to you by mail/e-mail upon request

I have read and understood the information provided to me. I have participated in this study voluntarily for my satisfaction.

I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher Signature

Date

Appendix 4
Descriptive Statistics: Frequency Tables

Appendix 4.1
Gender of participants

Gender of participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Boy	59	39.3	39.3	39.3
	Girl	91	60.7	60.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 4.2
Mother tongue of participants

Mother tongue of Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nepali	129	86.0	86.0	86.0
	Magar	6	4.0	4.0	90.0
	Rai	3	2.0	2.0	92.0
	Dhimal	1	.7	.7	92.7
	Limbu	5	3.3	3.3	96.0
	Gurung	4	2.7	2.7	98.7
	Tamang	1	.7	.7	99.3
	Newari	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 4.3
Ethnicity of participants

Ethnicity of participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Aryan	54	36.0	36.0	36.0
	Mangol	78	52.0	52.0	88.0
	Terain	7	4.7	4.7	92.7
	Dalit	7	4.7	4.7	97.3
	Other	4	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 4.4
Age of participants

Age of Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 14	4	2.7	2.7	2.7
15	27	18.0	18.0	20.7
16	57	38.0	38.0	58.7
17	31	20.7	20.7	79.3
18	19	12.7	12.7	92.0
19	8	5.3	5.3	97.3
20	4	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 4.5
Level of education of mother

Level of education of mother

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Illiterate mother	65	43.3	43.3	43.3
Mother under SLC	68	45.3	45.3	88.7
Mother SLC passed	9	6.0	6.0	94.7
Mother PCL	7	4.7	4.7	99.3
Mother above Bachelor	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 4.6
Level of education of father

Level of education of father

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Illiterate father	15	10.0	10.0	10.0
Father below SLC	76	50.7	50.7	60.7
Father SLC passed	42	28.0	28.0	88.7
Father PCL	12	8.0	8.0	96.7
Father above Bachelor	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 5
Questionnaires in English and Nepali

Appendix 5.1
Questionnaire in English

Student Questionnaire: Opinion on the SLC Exam of Nepal

February 2014

This questionnaire is part of a study designed to explore the consequences of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exam of Nepal on test-takers. The survey will take approximately an hour to complete. All survey respondents and the data collected will remain anonymous. Thank you for your assistance with this study.

If, however, you would like to receive results (by the end of August), please provide your e-mail.

If not, leave the e-mail line blank.

E-mail..... (OPTIONAL)

Part: 1

DIRECTIONS: Please respond to the following items. Place a check mark (✓) in each of the boxes that best describes you and add information if required.

1. I am: Male Female
2. My year of birth is:
3. How do you self-identify in terms of ethnicity? I am:
(I) an Aryan (II) a Mangol (III) a Terain (IV) a Dalit (V) Other
4. My mother tongue (first language-language spoken at home) is.....
5. Have you taken the SLC exam before? Yes No If "Yes," how many times?.....
6. Have you ever failed any examinations? Yes No If "Yes," how many times?.....
7. Are you the first member of your family to attend school Yes No
8. What is the level of education of your parents?
Father: Below SLC SLC passed PCL passed Bachelor passed or above
Mother: Below SLC SLC passed PCL passed Bachelor passed or above
9. My optional papers/courses in grade ten are:.....
10. In school, approximately what percentage of classes do you attend?
100% 80-99% 60-79% less than 60%
11. Do you have a clear reason for going to school? Yes No
If you answered, "Yes," please explain:
12. What percentage did you receive in your previous grades (i.e., grade, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)?
Grade 5:..... Grade 6:..... Grade 7:..... Grade 8:..... Grade 9:.....
13. What percentage are you thinking to obtain in the SLC exam?
90% above 80-89% 60-79% less than 60%
14. Do you have to work at home? Yes No If "Yes," about how many hours a day?
15. How many hours do you study at home?.....
16. Do you have any job? Yes No

Part: 2

In the following section, please respond by circling the number (from 1 to 6) that best answers the question:

17. Are you getting full support and co-operation from your parents to prepare for the SLC exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
18. Are you getting full support and co-operation from the school administrators and teachers to prepare for the SLC exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very

19. Are you taking any additional SLC exam preparation classes beyond your regular school classes (e. g. coaching, tuition classes etc.) ? Yes No
 If "Yes," how helpful are they? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
20. Is the SLC exam very important to you? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
21. Are your teachers friendly? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
22. Before the SLC exam, do parents pressure their children to get good results? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
23. Before the SLC exam, do school administrators and teachers pressure their students to get good results? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
24. Do you think an alternative for those who can't pass the SLC exam is a good idea? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
 Why?.....
25. Is poverty one of the causes of the extreme negative consequences of the SLC exam for those who fail the exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
26. It is said that the importance of SLC exam has been magnified unnecessarily, especially by the mass media- it has been made a *scary monster*. Do you think this is true? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
27. Do you think that some who fail the SLC exam are more likely to be involved in criminal activities or use drugs? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
28. Do you think that the SLC exam is associated with prestige by stakeholders (e. g. students, parents, teachers, principals, etc.) ? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
29. How often do you interact with your teachers? Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 Often
30. How often do you get in touch with classmates outside the classroom? Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 Often
31. How often do you work with classmates to prepare homework ? Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 Often
32. Are you preparing for the SLC exam with your classmates? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
33. How would you rate your overall academic skills Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 Excellent
34. How often do you get feedback from your teachers? Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 Often
35. Is the feedback on your homework and internal tests important to you? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
36. How would you rate your skills managing exam pressure? Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 Excellent
37. How motivated are you to succeed in the SLC exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
38. Do you have a favourable environment at home to prepare for the SLC exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
39. Are you satisfied with the school administration regarding the services it is providing to you to prepare for the SLC exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
40. Are you satisfied with the school teachers regarding the services they are providing to you to prepare for the SLC exam? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
41. Are you preparing for the SLC exam under pressure? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very
 If your answer is , "Yes", what kind of pressure are you working under now? What's in your mind? (e. g. fear, frustration, etc)

42. Is the SLC exam system in Nepal reliable? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very

43. Are answer sheets of the SLC exam marked fairly? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Yes, very

Part: 3

44. What is the reaction of parents of children who fail the SLC exam (e. g. , scolding, encouraging, etc..)? List words or phrases to response to this question.

(I) (II)
(III)..... (IV).....

45. Why, do you think, the SLC exam is important? (e. g. gate-keeper, job opportunity etc.). List words or phrases to response to this question.

(I) (II)
(III) (IV)

46. In your opinion, which one of the following is the most and the least important factor regarding the importance of the SLC exam? Rank them from 1 to 4; write 1 in the parenthesis for the most important one, and 4 for the least important one. If you think that they are equally important, give the same rank to them.

(.....) It opens the door to higher education (.....) It opens the door to job opportunity
(.....) It raises prestige in the society (.....) It prevents students from going into a wrong track

47. What bad consequences of the SLC exam results have you heard about (e.g. leaving school, start using drugs, etc.) ? List words or phrases to response to this question.

(I) (II).....
(III)..... (IV).....

48. In your opinion, what are the factors that account for extreme negative consequences of the SLC

exam? List words or phrases to response to this question.

(I) (II).....
(III)..... (IV).....

49. What should be done to minimize extreme negative consequences of SLC exam? List words or phrases to response to this question.

(I) (II).....
(III)..... (IV).....

50. Finally, do you want to share anything else about the SLC exam?

.....

Thank you for your participation!

Yogendra Bhattarai

E-mail: ybhattarai102@gmail.com

Appendix 5.2
Questionnaire in Nepali
प्रश्नावली

यो प्रश्नावली S.L.C. परीक्षाले निम्त्याउने नकारात्मक परिणामसँग सम्बन्धित छ । यसबाट सङ्कलित उत्तरहरु केवल अनुसन्धान प्रयोजनका लागि मात्र लागु गरिनेछ र यसबाट अथवा, यसमा कुनै पनि सहभागीहरुको परिचय खुल्नेछैन र आफुलाई लागेका र आफुले बुझेका कुराहरु स्पष्ट र यथार्थ रूपमा प्रस्तुत गर्नुहुन अनुरोध गर्दछु ।

भाग - १

१. तपाईं छात्र हो की छात्रा ? छात्र छात्रा
२. तपाईं कति वर्षको हुनु भयो? १६ वर्ष
३. तपाईं आफुलाई कुन सम्प्रदाय भित्र राख्नुहुन्छ ?
क) मंगोल ख) आर्यन ग) दलित घ) तराइवासी ङ) अन्य
४. तपाईंको मातृभाषा के हो ? नेपाली
५. के तपाईंले यसभन्दा अगाडि पनि S.L.C. परीक्षा दिनु भएको छ ?
 छ छैन
६. तपाईं कहिल्यै कुनै परीक्षामा असफल हुनुभएको छ ?
 छ छैन
७. के तपाईंको परिवारमा स्कूल जाने पहिलो सदस्य तपाईं हो ?
 हो होइन
८. तपाईंको बुबा-आमाले कतिसम्म पढ्नुभएको छ ?
बुबा: S.L.C. भन्दा तल S.L.C. पास निरक्षर
 P.C.L. पास B.A. भन्दा माथि
आमा: S.L.C. भन्दा तल S.L.C. पास निरक्षर
 P.C.L. पास B.A. भन्दा माथि निरक्षर
९. तपाईंले कक्षा १० मा लिनु भएकु ऐच्छिक विषयहरु के-के हुन् ?
क) र. प्रयोग ख) र. भाषा ग)
१०. तपाईंको कक्षा १० मा सरदर कति प्रतिशत हाजिरी होला ?
क) १००% ख) ८०%-९०% ग) ६०%-७९% घ) ६०% भन्दा कम
११. तपाईं स्कूल पढ्न जानुको पछाडि कुनै स्पष्ट कारण छ ?
 छ छैन
यदि छ भने प्रष्ट पारिदिनुहुन्छ कि सिद्धित फलन र परिवारलाई पाल्न
१२. तपाईंले अधिल्ला कक्षाहरुमा सरदर कति प्रतिशतसम्म अड्क हाँसिल गर्न भएको थियो ?
क) ६०% कक्षा ४ ख) ४५% कक्षा-५ ग) ४६% कक्षा-६ घ) ६७% कक्षा-७
ङ) ६०% कक्षा-८ च) ६९% कक्षा-९
१३. तपाईंले यसपाली S.L.C. परीक्षामा कति प्रतिशतसम्म अंक ल्याउनु होला भन्ने अनुमान गर्नु भएको छ ?
क) ९०% भन्दा माथि ख) ८०-८९% ग) ६०-७९% घ) ४५% - ५९%
ङ) ३२% - ४४% च) ३२% भन्दा कम ।

१४. तपाईंले घरमा पढाईको अलावा काम पनि गर्नुपर्छ ?
 पर्छ पर्दैन
१५. तपाईं घरमा सरदर कति घण्टा पढ्नुहुन्छ ? ...५... घण्टा
१६. तपाईं पढाईको अलावा अन्य कुनै रोजगारी अथवा पेशा गर्नुहुन्छ ?
 क) गर्छु ख) गर्दिन
१७. तपाईं S.L.C. तयारीका लागि स्कूलभन्दा अन्य तयारी कक्षाहरु जस्तै Coaching, Tutition जस्ता कक्षाहरु पनि लिदैहुनुहुन्छ ?
 छ छैन

भाग २

तलका प्रश्नको उत्तर दिनका लागि १ देखि ६ सम्मका अंकहरु कायम गरिएको छ जसमा १ ले ०% (पटकै छैन/होइन), २ ले २०%, ३ ले ४०%, ४ ले ६०%, ५ ले ८०% र ६ ले १००% (एकदमै हो/छ) भन्ने जनाउछ। कुन चाहिँ सबैभन्दा उपयुक्त सम्भावित उत्तर लाग्छ, त्यसमा गोलो लगाएर उत्तर दिनुहोस्।

१८. तपाईंले S.L.C. परीक्षा तयारीमा बुबाआमाबाट पूर्ण सहयोग पाउनु भएको छ ?
 → पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ पूर्ण सहयोग छ।
१९. तपाईंले S.L.C. परीक्षाको तयारीमा स्कूल प्रशासन र शिक्षकहरुबाट पूर्ण सहयोग पाउनु भएको छ ?
 → पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ पूर्ण सहयोग छ।
२०. के S.L.C. परीक्षा तपाईंका लागि धेरै नै महत्वपूर्ण छ ?
 → पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै नै छ।
२१. के तपाईंका शिक्षकहरु मिलनसार हुनुहुन्छ ?
 → पटकै हुनुहुन्न, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै मिलनसार हुनुहुन्छ।
२२. के अभिभावकहरुले S.L.C. परीक्षा अगाडि अथवा तयारीका क्रममा आफ्ना छोरा-छोरीलाई राम्रै नतिजा ल्याउनुपर्छ भनेर दबाव दिन्छन् ?
 → पटकै दिनुहुन्न, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै दिनुहुन्छ।
२३. के स्कूल प्रशासन र शिक्षकहरुले पनि उनीहरुका विद्यार्थीहरुलाई S.L.C. परीक्षा तयारीका क्रममा राम्रै नतिजा ल्याउनुपर्छ भनेर दबाव दिने गर्दछन् ?
 → पटकै दिदैनन्, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ पूर्ण रुपमा दिन्छन्।
२४. के S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुत्तीर्ण विद्यार्थीहरुका लागि अन्य कुनै वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था गरिनु राम्रो हो ?
 → पटकै हैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै राम्रो हो।
 → यदि राम्रो हो भने किन ?उनीहरुलाई योग्य बनाउन /
२५. के S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुत्तीर्ण गर्ने विद्यार्थीहरुमा नकारात्मक परिणामहरु जस्तै लागुपदार्थ सेवन, आत्महत्या गर्ने जस्ता अवस्था सृजनना गर्न प्रमुख भुमिका खेल्ने तत्वहरुमध्ये गरिवी पनि एउटा मुख्य तत्व हो ?
 → होइन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै हो।
२६. S.L.C. परीक्षालाई अनावश्यक रुपमा महत्व दिएर यसलाई हार्डगुजी बनाइएको छ भन्छन् नी, के यो सत्य हो ?
 → होइन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ हो।
२७. के S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुत्तीर्ण विद्यार्थीहरु बढीमात्रमा अपराधिक क्रियाकलाप र लागुऔषध सेवनमा लाग्ने बढी सम्भावना हुन्छ भन्छन नि के त्यो सत्य हो ?
 → हैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै हो।

२८. S.L.C परीक्षाको नतिजा, अभिभावक, प्र.अ. शिक्षक तथा विद्यार्थीको ईज्जतसग जोडिएको हुन्छ?
→ होइन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै हो।
२९. तपाईं आफ्नो शिक्षकसग पढाईको बारेमा छलफल गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ कहिलै गर्दिन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै गर्छु।
३०. तपाईं स्कूल समयभन्दा बाहेक आफ्ना साथीहरूसग कतिको सम्पर्क गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ कहिलै गर्दिन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै गर्छु।
३१. तपाईं गृहकार्य गर्दा कतिको साथीहरूसग सँगै बसेर गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ कहिलै गर्दिन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै गर्छु।
३२. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको तयारी साथीहरूसगै बसेर गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै सँगै बस्छु।
३३. तपाईं आफ्नो क्षमतालाई कसरी मुल्यांकन गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ एकदमै कमजोर, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै राम्रो।
३४. तपाईंले आफ्ना शिक्षकहरूसग कतिको Feed Back पाउने गर्नु भएको छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै पाउँछु।
३५. के गृहकार्य र आन्तरिक परीक्षहरूसग पाउने feed back तपाईंको लागि महत्वपूर्ण छन?
→ छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छन।
३६. तपाईं परीक्षाको विशेषगरी S.L.C. परीक्षाको दबावलाई व्यवस्थापन गर्ने आफ्नो शिपलाई कसरी मुल्यांकन गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ एकदमै कमजोर, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै राम्रो।
३७. तपाईं S.L.C परीक्षामा सफलता हासिल गर्नु कतिको उत्साहित हुनुहुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
३८. के तपाईंको घरमा S.L.C. परीक्षाको लागि चाहिने उपयुक्त वातावरण छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
३९. के तपाईंको घरमा S.L.C. परीक्षाको लागि विद्यालयले दिएको सेवा प्रति सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
४०. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको लागि शिक्षकले गरेको सरसहयोग वा सेवा प्रति सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
४१. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको तयारी कुनै तनावमा रहेर गर्नु हुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
यदी तनाव छ भने, कस्तो खालको तनाव हो? जस्तै: डर, चिन्ता,
S.L.C परीक्षामा पास गरीभजनमा आउनु भनेर चिन्ता लागेको छ।
४२. के नेपालको S.L.C. परीक्षा प्रणाली विश्वसनिय छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
४३. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको उत्तरपुस्तिकाहरु निष्पक्ष रूपमा परिक्षण गरिन्छ भन्ने लाग्छ?
→ पटकै लाग्दैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै लाग्छ।

भाग-३

४४. S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुतिर्ण विद्यार्थीहरूका अभिभावकहरूको प्रतिक्रिया उनीहरूका छोराछोरी प्रति कस्तो हुने गर्दछ? (जस्तै: गाली गर्ने, प्रोत्साहन गर्ने, रिसाउने, आदि ।) आफूले धाहापुएका कुराहरू लेख्नुहोस। क) गाली गर्ने ख) प्रोत्साहन गर्ने ग) रिसाउने
घ) सिद्देश पठाउने ड) सिद्देश च) गिर्छाउने
४५. तपाईंलाई S.L.C. किन महत्वपूर्ण छ जस्तो लाग्छ? (जस्तै: gate keeper, iron gate, जागिरको लागि नभई महुने भएर, आदि ।) आफूलाई लागेका कुराहरू लेख्नुहोस। क) उच्च शिक्षाको आधार ख) इज्जत पाउने ग) जागिर पाउने
घ) सिद्देश पठाउने ड) सम्पत्ति कमाउने च) शुद्ध
४६. तपाईंलाई तलदिइएका S.L.C. परीक्षासंग अथवा यसको महत्वसंग सम्बन्धित विचारहरूमध्ये कुन चाहिँ एकदमै महत्वपूर्ण र कुन चाहिँ कम महत्वपूर्ण छ? ठिक क्रममा लेख्नुहोस ।
क) १ यसले उच्च शिक्षाको लागि बाटो खुल्ला गर्छ ।
ख) १ यसले जागिर पाउनमा ठूलो शुभिका खेल्छ ।
ग) १ यसले समाजमा इज्जत बढाउँछ ।
घ) १ यसले विद्यार्थीलाई गलत बाटोमा लाग्नबाट बचाउँछ ।
४७. तपाईंको विचारमा के कस्ता कारणले गर्दा S.L.C. परीक्षामा अनुतिर्ण हुने विद्यार्थीहरू गलत कार्य गर्न बाध्य हुन्छन् अथवा गर्ने गर्दछन्? तपाईंलाई मनमा लागेका कुराहरू लेख्नुहोस ।
क) सिद्देश ख) गलत सिद्देश ग) सल्लाह
घ) घर/सकुलको गाली
४८. तपाईंलाई S.L.C. परीक्षाको नतिजासंग सम्बन्धित के कस्ता दुःखद समाचारहरू सुन्नु भएको छ?
क) आत्महत्या गर्ने ख) सुख समाचार ग) राज्यत घल्ने
घ) गौरवका घल्ने
४९. तपाईंको विचारमा S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुतिर्ण भएपछि विद्यार्थीहरूले गर्ने विभिन्न खालका नकारात्मक कार्यहरूलाई कम गर्न वा रोक्न के गर्नुपर्छ जस्तो लाग्छ? आफ्नो विचारहरू शब्दमा लेख्नुहोस ।
क) सिद्देश दिने ख) सिद्देश दिने ग) समस्या बुझ्ने
घ) सहायता दिने
५०. अन्त्यमा S.L.C. परीक्षाको बारेमा तपाईंलाई आफ्नो मनमा लागेका कुराहरू सेयर गर्न चाहानुहुन्छ भने तल लेख्नुहोस ।
S.L.C. परीक्षा भन्नेको हामी विद्यार्थीको एक पहिचान हुने सुरुवात हो। र S.L.C.ले हामीलाई राम्रो बानी, राम्रो काममा सहयोग गर्ने गर्दछ। S.L.C. परीक्षाले हामीलाई उच्च शिक्षा तर्फ धोर्न्याउने गर्दछ।

सहयोगको लागि धन्यवाद
योगेन्द्र बहादुर भट्टराई

Appendix 6

Three Tables for Response Collection

ID	Question No.																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	L	16	मंजोले	रेवली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: USLC	Eco AC	रख	yes	5=70,6=75,7=60 8=61,9=48	ET	yes	2-3	No	NO
2	G	19	मंजोले	"	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: IL	Eco AC	रख	yes	5=,6=80,7=70 8=68,9=60	रख	NO	2-3	yes	NO
3	L	18	मंजोले	अग्र	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: IL	Eco AC	ET	yes	5=68,6=62,7=46 8=45,9=50	ET	yes	3	yes	NO
4	G	18	मंजोले	राई	yes	yes	yes	F: IL M: IL	Edu Eco	ET	NO	5=,6=,7=33 8=35,9=32	रख	yes	1	yes	yes
5	G	16	मंजोले	अग्र	NO	yes	NO	F: SLC M: SLC	Eco ACC	रख	NO	5=52,6=51,7=57 8=61,9=49	क	NO	3	NO	yes
6	G	15	मंजोले	रेवली	NO	NO	yes	F: USLC M: IL	CV ACC	रख	yes	5=,6=50,7=39 8=39,9=55	ET	yes	4	NO	yes
7	L	18	लक्ष्मण	रेवली	NO	yes	yes	F: USLC M: IL	CV ED	रख	yes	5=,6=,7=59 8=58,9=60	क	yes	2	yes	yes
8	L	15	मंजोले	राई	NO	yes	NO	F: SLC M: USLC	CV ED	ET	yes	5=50,6=61,7=52 8=53,9=49	रख	NO	5	yes	yes
9	L	19	लक्ष्मण	रेवली	NO	yes	yes	F: USLC M: IL	CV ED	ET	yes	5=49,6=50,7=52 8=55,9=57	ET	yes	2	yes	yes
10	G	20	मंजोले	लिङ्गु	NO	yes	yes	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco ACC	ET	yes	5=46,6=40,7=42 8=60,9=52	ET	yes	1-2	NO	yes
11	G	15	आर्षी	रेवली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: USLC	Eco ACC	रख	yes	5=60,6=61,7=62 8=63,9=64	ET	yes	4	NO	yes
12	G	16	मंजोले	लिङ्गु	NO	yes	NO	F: SLC M: IL	Math ACC	क	yes	5=60,6=50,7=65 8=62,9=60	ET	yes	3	NO	yes
13	G	16	मंजोले	रेवली	NO	yes	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco EDU	ET	yes	5=,6=,7=50 8=42,9=35	ET	NO	2	NO	yes
14	G	16	अनघ	रेवली	NO	yes	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	CV EDU	ET	yes	5=,6=60,7=65 8=64,9=55	ET	yes	2	NO	yes
15	G	16	मंजोले	रेवली	NO	yes	NO	F: USLC M: IL	Eco ACC	रख	yes	5=,6=59,7=45 8=66,9=56	ET	NO	3	NO	yes
16	G	16	अनघ	रेवली	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: IL	CV EDU	ET	yes	5=45,6=48,7=50 8=57,9=52	ET	yes	2	NO	yes
17	G	16	मंजोले	शुद्ध	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco EDU	ET	yes	5=65,6=55,7=60 8=65,9=63	ET	yes	4	NO	yes
18	L	17	मंजोले	लामा	NO	NO	yes	F: IL M: IL	CV EDU	ET	yes	5=39,6=32,7=37 8=35,9=33	ET	yes	2	NO	yes
19	G	15	आर्षी	रेवली	NO	yes	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Maths ACC	ET	yes	5=40,6=45,7=49 8=46,9=47	ET	yes	3	NO	yes
20	G	17	लक्ष्मण	रेवली	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco ACC	रख	NO	5=54,6=60,7=62 8=56,9=55	ET	NO	3	NO	yes
21	G	20	मंजोले	राई	NO	yes	yes	F: USLC M: IL	CV EDU	ET	yes	5=,6=51,7=54 8=52,9=56	ET	yes	2	yes	yes
22	G	15	आर्षी	रेवली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: SLC	Maths ACC	रख	NO	5=,6=66,7=64 8=62,9=68	रख	NO	5	NO	yes
23	G	17	मंजोले	रेवली	NO	yes	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco ACC	रख	NO	5=35,6=35,7=36 8=40,9=41	ET	yes	1	NO	yes
24	G	20	मंजोले	रेवली	yes	yes	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco ACC	क	yes	5=52,6=50,7=57 8=60,9=45	ET	NO	2	NO	yes
25	L	16	मंजोले	शुद्ध	NO	NO	yes	F: USLC M: IL	CV EDU	क	yes	5=45,6=40,7=49 8=55,9=60	ET	yes	2	NO	yes
26	L	18	मंजोले	रेवली	NO	NO	NO	F: IL M: IL	CV EDU	ET	NO	5=,6=,7= 8=35,9=32	ET	yes	1	NO	yes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
27	L	17	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: IL	CV EDU	रख	NO	5=,6=,7=39 8=42,9=40	ग	2	NO	Yes	
28	L	19	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	Yes	NO	F: SLC M: IL	CV EDU	रख	Yes	5=,6=,7= 8=33,9=35	5	Yes	2	NO	Yes
29	L	17	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: IL M: IL	Eco EDU	रख	Yes	5=,6=,7= 8=66,9=62	ग	Yes	2	NO	Yes
30	L	17	लाइवासी	नेपली	NO	Yes	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	EDU CV	रख	Yes	5=,6=64,7=60 8=55,9=65	ग	Yes	3	Yes	Yes
31	L	18	लाइवासी	नेपली	NO	Yes	Yes	F: PCL M: SLC	CV EDU	ग	Yes	5=,6=57,7=60 8=58,9=59	रख	Yes	2	Yes	Yes
32	L	16	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	Yes	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=,6=68,7=60 8=68,9=69	रख	Yes	2	NO	Yes
33	L	16	मंगोल	लाइवासी	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=,6=61,7=60 8=60,9=59	ग	Yes	2	NO	Yes
34	L	19	दलित	नेपली	NO	NO	Yes	F: IL M: IL	CV EDU	ग	Yes	5=,6=64,7=62 8=48,9=50	3	Yes	3	NO	Yes
35	L	16	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=54,6=55,7=58 8=58,9=47	रख	Yes	2	NO	Yes
36	L	16	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=,6=71,7=78 8=78,9=70	रख	Yes	2	NO	Yes
37	L	16	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	Yes	F: U SLC M: SLC	Eco ACCO	रख	Yes	5=,6=63,7=69 8=55,9=63	ग	Yes	2	NO	Yes
38	L	17	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: IL M: IL	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=70,6=65,7=70 8=75,9=62	ग	Yes	3	NO	Yes
39	L	16	लाइवासी	नेपली	NO	Yes	NO	F: IL M: IL	Eco EDU	रख	Yes	5=50,6=60,7=65 8=50,9=56	रख	Yes	4	NO	NO
40	L	17	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	Yes	Yes	F: IL M: IL	Eco EDU	ग	Yes	5=55,6=60,7=58 8=60,9=65	ग	Yes	4	NO	Yes
41	L	19	मंगोल	ग	NO	NO	NO	F: PCL M: PCL	Eco EDU	रख	Yes	5=89,6=90,7=81 8=80,9=85	रख	Yes	4	Yes	Yes
42	L	17	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=59,6=63,7=65 8=66,9=66	ग	Yes	4	NO	Yes
43	L	17	दलित	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=59,6=62,7=48 8=48,9=48	रख	Yes	4	Yes	Yes
44	L	16	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: PCL M: U SLC	Eco EDU	रख	Yes	5=60,6=62,7=48 8=40,9=43	ग	Yes	3	NO	Yes
45	L	16	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco EDU	रख	Yes	5=60,6=55,7=58 8=49,9=52	रख	Yes	5	NO	Yes
46	L	15	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	CV EDU	रख	Yes	5=54,6=62,7=49 8=49,9=40	ग	Yes	2	Yes	Yes
47	L	15	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=45,6=48,7=60 8=50,9=55	ग	Yes	4	NO	Yes
48	L	18	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Maths ACC	रख	Yes	5=60,6=67,7=63 8=63,9=65	ग	Yes	5	NO	Yes
49	L	15	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	CV EDU	ग	Yes	5=35,6=36,7=37 8=50,9=44	रख	Yes	3	NO	Yes
50	L	16	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	रख	Yes	5=45,6=48,7=50 8=52,9=60	ग	Yes	4	NO	Yes
51	L	16	आर्थन	नेपली	NO	Yes	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco EDU	ग	Yes	5=35,6=38,7=36 8=36,9=37	रख	Yes	2	NO	Yes
52	L	16	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	Yes	NO	F: U SLC M: IL	CV EDU	रख	Yes	5=44,6=52,7=58 8=62,9=65	रख	NO	2	NO	Yes
53	L	17	मंगोल	नेपली	NO	NO	NO	F: IL M: U SLC	Eco EDU	ग	Yes	5=37,6=43,7=50 8=47,9=46	रख	Yes	2	NO	Yes

54	L	15	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: IL	Eco Edu	रख	Yes	5=55.6=45.7=46 8=55.9=56	रख	Yes	2	NO	Yes
55	L	16	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: IL	Eco Acc	रख	Yes	5=46.6=48.7=49 8=47.9=46	रख	NO	3	NO	Yes
56	L	16	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: IL M: IL	CV Edu	रख	S	5=47.6=49.7=48 8=46.9=46	ST	Yes	3	NO	Yes
57	L	17	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	Yes	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco Edu	ST	Yes	5=59.6=48.7=48 8=49.9=52	ST	Yes	1	NO	Yes
58	L	16	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: BA M: USLC	Eco Acc	ST	Yes	5= .6=68.7=57 8=58.9=60	ET	Yes	4	NO	Yes
59	L	16	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: SLC M: USLC	Eco Acc	रख	Yes	5=53.6=60.7=62 8=58.9=57	ST	Yes	4	NO	Yes
60	L	17	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: IL	Eco Acc	रख	Yes	5=62.6=64.7=65 8=67.9=69	रख	Yes	4	NO	Yes
61	L	17	मंगोल	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco Acc	रख	Yes	5=65.6=61.7=60 8=55.9=50	ST	Yes	3	NO	Yes
62	L	16	दलित	नेपाली	NO	NO	NO	F: IL M: IL	Eco Edu	ET	Yes	5= .6= .7=49 8=51.9=46	ET	Yes	3	NO	NO
63	L	16	मंगोल	नेपाली	"	"	"	F: IL M: USLC	Edu CV	रख	"	5=54.6=56.7=57 8=58.9=47	ST	"	3	"	Yes
64	L	16	"	"	"	"	Yes	F: SLC M: USLC	CV Edu	रख	"	5=48.6=47.7=46 8=49.9=58	ST	Yes	4	"	"
65	G	18	"	"	"	"	"	F: USLC M: IL	CV Acc	रख	"	5=45.6=57.7=55 8=48.9=47	ST	Yes	2	"	"
66	L	16	"	लिपु	"	"	Yes	F: IL M: IL	Maths Acc	रख	"	5=48.6=52.7=58 8=49.9=53	ST	"	5	"	"
67	G	16	"	नेपाली	"	"	NO	F: SLC M: USLC	CV Edu	ET	"	5=55.6=60.7=62 8=65.9=70	ST	NO	3	"	"
68	L	15	आर्य	"	"	"	"	F: SLC M: SLC	CV Acc	ST	"	5=42.6=45.7=50 8=54.9=49	ET	"	2	"	NO
69	G	17	दलित	"	"	Yes	Yes	F: SLC M: USLC	CV Edu	ST	"	5= .6=60.7=56 8=65.9=60	ST	Yes	4	"	"
70	L	16	अर्य	"	"	NO	NO	F: USLC M: USLC	CV Acc	रख	"	5=44.6=50.7=56 8=56.9=57	रख	"	2	Yes	Yes
71	L	15	आर्य	"	"	"	"	F: SLC M: SLC	Eco Acc	रख	"	5=75.6=72.7=72 8=85.9=80	रख	"	6	NO	"
72	L	16	मंगोल	"	Yes	"	"	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco Acc	रख	"	5=54.6=60.7=50 8=60.9=62	ST	"	3	"	"
73	L	15	"	"	NO	"	"	F: USLC M: IL	CV Edu	ST	"	5= .6=59.7=53 8=59.9=61	ST	"	2	"	"
74	L	19	"	मजद	"	"	"	F: PCL M: PCL	CV Edu	रख	"	5=79.6=69.7=85 8=82.9=80	रख	"	5	Yes	"
75	L	17	"	नेपाली	"	"	"	F: PCL M: PCL	CV Edu	ST	"	5= .6= .7=48 8=45.9=62	ST	"	3	NO	"
76	L	15	आर्य	"	"	"	"	F: SLC M: USLC	CV Edu	ST	"	5= .6=50.7=42 8=59.9=40	ST	"	6	"	"
77	L	16	"	"	"	"	"	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco Acc	रख	"	5= .6=80.7=70 8=75.9=80	ST	"	3	"	"
78	G	17	मंगोल	लिपु	"	Yes	"	F: USLC M: USLC	Eco Acc	रख	"	5= .6=60.7=78 8=69.9=70	रख	"	3	Yes	"
79	L	18	"	नेपाली	"	"	"	F: USLC M: USLC	CV Edu	रख	"	5= .6= .7=52 8=50.9=59	ST	"	2	NO	"
80	G	16	वडावासी	"	"	NO	"	F: USLC M: IL	Maths Acc	ET	"	5=43.6=50.7=45 8=57.9=55	ST	NO	1	"	"

81	G	18	अभ्य	नेपाली	NO	Yes	Yes	F: U SLC M: IL	Eco ACC	ग	Yes	5=50,6=40,7=45 8=40,9=35	ग	Yes	3	NO	Yes
82	G	11	आर्थिक	"	"	NO	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	ख	"	5=47,6=48,7=57 8=55,9=48	घ	"	4	"	"
83	L	15	"	"	"	Yes	"	F: IL M: IL	CV Edu	ख	"	5=,6=,7= 8=38,9=41	ङ	"	3	"	"
84	L	16	मंगोल	"	"	NO	"	F: U SLC M: U SLC	CV Edu	ग	"	5=,6=,7=35 8=49,9=41	घ	"	2	"	"
85	L	16	आर्थिक	"	"	"	"	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco Edu	ख	"	5=,6=,7=57 8=52,9=48	ङ	"	3	"	"
86	G	17	मंगोल	नेपाल	"	"	"	F: SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	ख	"	5=,6=48,7=41 8=32,9=48	ग	"	2	NO	"
87	G	16	"	नेपाली	"	"	"	F: SLC M: SLC	Eco ACC	ख	"	5=,6=45,7=40 8=50,9=50	घ	"	1	"	"
88	L	17	दलित	"	"	"	"	F: IL M: IL	Eco ACC	घ	"	5=,6=40,7=35 8=36,9=33	ङ	"	2	"	NO
89	L	14	आर्थिक	"	"	"	"	F: SLC M: IL	Eco Edu	ग	"	5=54,6=52,7=48 8=51,9=43	ङ	"	4	"	Yes
90	G	16	"	"	"	"	"	F: U SLC M: IL	Maths ACC	ख	"	5=54,6=52,7=53 8=57,9=58	घ	NO	3	"	"
91	L	16	मंगोल	"	"	"	"	F: U SLC M: IL	CV Edu	ङ	"	5=60,6=65,7=75 8=62,9=65	ग	Yes	3	"	"
92	G	18	आर्थिक	"	"	Yes	"	F: IL M: IL	Eco ACC	ग	"	5=,6=63,7=62 8=59,9=55	ग	"	3-4	"	"
93	L	15	मंगोल	"	"	NO	"	F: SLC M: U SLC	Maths ACC	ख	"	5=,6=60,7=62 8=63,9=60	ग	"	3-30	"	"
94	L	17	"	"	"	"	"	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	ङ	"	5=,6=57,7=56 8=62,9=65	ख	"	6	"	"
95	L	17	आर्थिक	"	"	"	"	F: PCL M: PCL	Eco ACC	ख	"	5=,6=78,7=80 8=70,9=75	ख	"	4	"	"
96	L	17	मंगोल	"	"	Yes	"	F: U SLC M: IL	Eco ACC	ङ	"	5=55,6=57,7=61 8=60,9=62	ग	"	5	Yes	"
97	L	16	"	"	"	NO	"	F: U SLC M: U SLC	Eco ACC	ख	"	5=,6=70,7=80 8=78,9=82	ख	"	2	NO	"
98	G	17	दलित	"	"	Yes	Yes	F: IL M: IL	Maths ACC	ख	"	5=,6=51,7=47 8=44,9=46	ङ	NO	2	"	"
99	L	17	मंगोल	"	"	"	"	F: PCL M: PCL	CV Edu	ख	"	5=,6=35,7=55 8=62,9=48	ङ	Yes	3	"	"
100	L	19	"	"	"	NO	NO	F: SLC M: U SLC	Edu CV	ङ	"	5=62,6=60,7=65 8=62,9=60	ग	Yes	3	"	"

Note: \Rightarrow L is used for lady (girl) and G for Gent (Boy).

- In answer no. 8,** U S.L.C. refers to S.L.C. भन्दा तल 1, S.L.C. refers to S.L.C. पास ।
P.C.L. refers to P.CL. पास, B.A. refers to B.A. अथवा माथि IL refers to निरक्षर । and
F= Father, M= Mother
- In answer no. 10,** (क) Refers to 100%, (ख) Refers to 80%-90%, (ग) Refers to 60%-79%
(घ) Refers to 60% भन्दा कम । भन्दा कम ।
- In answer no. 12,** 5 refers कक्षा-५, 6 refers कक्षा-६, 7 refers कक्षा-७, 8 refers कक्षा-८, and
9 refers कक्षा-९
- In answer no. 13,** (क) Refers 90% भन्दा माथि 1, (ख) Refers to 80%-90%,
(ग) Refers to 60%-79% (घ) Refers to 45%-69%
(ङ) Refers to 32%-44% (च) Refers to 32% भन्दा कम ।
- In other answers,** Yes is used for positive answer and No for negative answer.
Similarly, CV, Eco, Math, Edu and ACC gradually stand for Civics, Economics, Mathematics

Question Number															
ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	1	17	2	1	N	Y	N	F 2 M 2	2 3	2	Y	5=60,6=48,7=50 8=44 9=53	3	Y-2	5
2	1	18	1	1	N	N	Y	F 2 M 2	2 4	2	Y	5=60,6=70,7=54 8=65 9=57	4	N	2
3	1	19	2	1	N	N	Y	F 2 M 3	2 4	2	Y	5=65,6=55,7=55 8=50 9=50	4	N	2
4	1	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-2 M-2	2 4	2	Y	5=60,6=49,7=55 8=50 9=-	3	Y-2	4
* 5	2	15	1	1	N	Y	N	F-1 M-3	2 3	2	Y	5=45,6=48,7=52 8=55 9=56	3	N	4
6	2	15	1	1	N	N	N	F 1 M 1	2 3	2	Y	5=60,6=50,7=45 8=45 9=55	3	N	5
7	2	16	1	1	N	N	Y	F-1 M-3	2 3	2	Y	5=60,6=50,7=45 8=35 9=38	3	Y-4	2
8	2	15	2	1	N	Y	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=45,6=46,7=45 8=45 9=-	3	Y-5	3
9	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	1	Y	5=75,6=80,7=85 8=86 9=-	3	N	6
10	2	19	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 4	1	Y	5=75,6=45,7=50 8=60 9=-	3	Y-3	6
11	2	20	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	1 3	1	Y	5=50,6=57,7=60 8=57 9=66	2	Y	4
* 12	2	16	1	1	N	Y	N	F-2 M-2	2 4	2	Y	5=49,6=52,7=50 8=54 9=51	3	N	3
13	2	15	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 4	2	Y	5=55,6=51,7=50 8=55 9=-	3	Y-3	4
* 14	1	15	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	2 4	2	Y	5=50,6=52,7=54 8=53 9=55	2	Y-2	4
15	1	15	1	1	N	N	Y	F-1 M-2	1 4	1	Y	5=65,6=70,7=72 8=77 9=78	2	Y-1	5
16	1	16	1	1	N	N	N	F 1 M 1	2 4	1	Y	5=55,6=70,7=60 8=75 9=80	4	N	6
17	1	15	1	1	N	N	N	F 1 M 1	2 5	1	Y	5=50,6=45,7=55 8=52 9=56	3	Y	5
18	2	15	4	1	N	Y	Y	F 1 M 1	2 3	3	N	5=48,6=51,7=44 8=49 9=52	4	Y-2	4
19	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F 1 M 1	2 4	1	Y	5=90,6=70,7=80 8=60 9=65	3	Y-2	5
20	1	18	1	1	N	N	N	F 1 M 1	1 4	2	Y	5=53,6=61,7=58 8=53 9=-	2	N	7
21	1	17	2	2	N	Y	Y	F 1 M 1	2 3	2	Y	5=50,6=35,7=40 8=40 9=48	4	Y	2
22	1	15	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	1 4	1	Y	5=62,6=65,7=70 8=75 9=60	3	Y-2	4
23	1	18	1	1	N	N	Y	F-1 M-2	2 3	1	Y	5=60,6=70,7=60 8=50 9=55	3	Y	5
24	1	15	1	1	Y	Y	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=60,6=65,7=50 8=70 9=-	2	Y	4
25	1	16	1	1	N	N	Y	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=60,6=67,7=65 8=58 9=55	4	Y-2	2
26	1	18	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	1	Y	5=50,6=55,7=60 8=40 9=40	1	N	3

⑤ 1-opt math, 2- Eco, 3-health, 4-Account, 5-education

27	1	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-3 M-4	1 3	3	Y	5=69,6=65,7=68 8=60 9=62	3	Y ₁	6	N
28	1	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	1 3	2	Y	5=55,6=45,7=67 8=61 9=63	2	Y	5	N
29	1	17	1	1	N	N	N	F-3 M-3	2 3	2	Y	5=45,6=60,7=55 8=65 9=62	2	N	8	N
30	1	18	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 4	3	Y	5=50,6=45,7=35 8=40 9=40	4	Y	2	N
* 31	2	17	2	2	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	2 3	3	Y	5=50,6=52,7=55 8=60 9=62	3	Y	2	N
32	1	14	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-3	2 3	3	Y	5=56,6=53,7=62 8=55 9=52	3	Y ₂	5	N
33	2	17	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	1	Y	5=50,6=60,7=70 8=80 9=55	3	Y	6	N
34	1	18	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 4	1	Y	5=52,6=45,7=49 8=55 9=53	3	N	5	N
35	2	15	2	1	N	Y	Y	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=45,6=35,7=46 8=51 9=42	3	Y=2	4	N
* 36	1	17	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	2 3	3	Y	5=50,6=46,7=52 8=49 9=60	3	Y=2	4	1
37	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 4	2	Y	5=60,6=70,7=80 8=84 9=62	2	Y=1	6	N
38	2	15	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-3	1 4	1	Y	5=85,6=85,7=82 8=83 9=80	3	Y=2	3	N
39	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-4	1 4	1	Y	5=70,6=65,7=70 8=75 9=70	3	Y=2	3	N
40	1	16	2	2	N	N	N	F-2 M-3	1 4	3	N	5=51,6=48,7=59 8=60 9=58	3	Y=3	3	N
41	2	17	2	3	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	2 3	4	N	5=44,6=47,7=51 8=50 9=49	4	Y=2	5	N
42	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-4	1 4	3	N	5=51,6=47,7=48 8=52 9=55	4	Y=2	4	N
43	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=40,6=35,7=45 8=50 9=49	3	Y=4	6	N
44	1	18	1	1	N	N	Y	F-3 M-2	2 4	2	Y	5=65,6=60,7=55 8=45 9=52	4	N	6	Y
45	2	18	1	1	N	Y=1	N	F-1 M-1	2 5	2	Y	5=40,6=45,7=45 8=43 9=48	4	Y	4	N
46	1	14	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 5	2	Y	5=60,6=45,7=50 8=50 9=60	3	Y=2	8	N
* 47	1	15	2	3	N	N	N	F-1 M-2	2 3	2	N	5=50,6=55,7=56 8=58 9=60	3	Y=3	6	N
48	2	17	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=40,6=45,7=41 8=40 9=48	3	Y=1	2	N
49	2	15	2	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 4	2	Y	5=50,6=60,7=40 8=50 9=56	3	Y=2	3	N
50	2	16	1	1	N	N	N	F-1 M-1	2 3	2	Y	5=45,6=40,7=50 8=60 9=52	3	Y=2	3	N
51								F M				5= 8= 9=				
52								F M				5= 8= 9=				
53								F M				5= 8= 9=				
54								F M				5= 8= 9=				

Response Table 2 (Part Two)

ID	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
1	4	3	3	5	4	3	6	6	5	6	1	4	5	5	6	3	3	4	4	6	6	3	1	2	6	2	1
2	3	1	2	6	2	3	5	6	5	4	1	5	1	4	4	3	3	3	4	5	5	2	2	2	6	1	1
3	3	2	2	6	2	3	4	6	5	5	1	4	1	5	3	1	3	3	3	5	5	3	2	2	5	2	1
4	4	3	2	5	2	3	6	5	6	5	2	5	5	5	6	4	3	4	4	5	5	3	2	2	6	2	1
5	3	2	2	5	2	2	3	6	3	5	2	4	1	4	3	2	4	3	4	4	5	6	3	1	2	4	1
6	4	3	3	6	2	3	3	5	6	5	2	5	6	3	6	3	3	5	4	4	5	3	2	2	5	2	1
7	4	4	2	5	6	3	6	6	5	5	3	5	5	4	6	4	3	5	4	6	6	3	1	3	6	2	1
8	4	4	2	5	2	4	6	6	4	4	2	4	4	4	6	4	3	5	4	5	5	3	2	3	4	2	3
9	4	4	3	5	2	3	2	6	4	4	1	5	5	5	6	3	3	5	4	4	6	4	1	3	5	1	1
10	4	4	3	6	4	3	4	4	5	6	1	4	5	5	6	3	3	5	4	2	5	3	1	2	2	2	1
11	4	4	2	5	6	4	4	6	4	6	3	4	6	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	6	2	2	3	5	2	1
12	4	3	2	6	2	3	6	6	5	6	2	5	3	3	4	2	3	3	2	6	3	2	1	2	2	2	2
13	4	3	3	6	1	4	4	4	4	6	2	6	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	1	6	2	1	2	4	2	4
14	3	4	2	5	2	4	6	6	1	6	2	4	5	4	3	2	2	3	3	2	6	4	2	3	2	3	3
15	4	4	4	5	2	4	5	4	6	4	2	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	4	3	6	4	1	2	3	2	1
16	4	3	3	5	1	4	5	5	5	5	2	4	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	6	6	1	2	2	5	2	3
17	4	3	2	5	3	4	4	6	4	5	3	5	4	3	5	3	3	3	4	3	5	4	2	3	2	2	1
18	2	3	3	6	3	2	2	5	4	6	2	5	3	2	1	4	2	3	4	2	6	1	2	2	3	1	2
19	4	4	3	5	3	3	1	6	5	5	1	4	5	5	6	3	3	5	4	6	5	4	1	3	6	2	3
20	4	2	2	6	3	4	4	6	5	4	3	5	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	2	6	3	2	3	2	2	1
21	4	2	3	6	3	4	4	2	6	5	3	6	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	5	5	3	2	3	5	2	1
22	4	4	4	5	1	5	6	6	5	6	1	6	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	4	1	2	2	2	3
23	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	1	4	6	5	6	4	5	5	5	4	3	5	4	1	2	2	2	1
24	3	3	2	4	3	3	5	6	6	5	1	3	5	5	6	4	4	4	4	5	6	2	3	3	6	2	1
25	2	4	3	4	1	1	6	4	5	6	1	6	1	3	6	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	3	3	5	1	2
26	3	4	2	5	3	4	3	6	4	5	3	6	1	5	4	3	3	4	3	6	6	4	2	2	6	1	4
27	4	1	3	6	3	4	4	6	2	6	4	4	6	5	6	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	1	2	2	1	3
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31	3	4	3	4	3	2	6	5	5	6	1	6	1	4	1	4	3	1	4	6	6	1	4	1	6	3	2
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35	4	3	2	4	1	3	3	6	5	6	1	4	3	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	6	3	2	2	4	2	1
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59	6	2	2	6	1	4	5	6	4	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	2	5	6	5	5	3	5	5
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78	6	2	4	6	1	5	4	5	5	5	2	6	5	4	4	6	5	4	5	5	6	5	3	5	4	5
79	5	2	6	6	1	5	4	6	5	5	3	6	5	4	3	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5
80	5	2	3	6	2	6	5	5	4	5	3	6	5	4	3	5	5	5	4	5	6	6	4	5	4	1
81	6	2	3	6	1	4	5	1	3	4	3	6	5	3	4	5	4	5	1	6	5	5	5	6	5	1
82	5	2	2	6	1	5	4	5	5	5	3	5	5	4	3	5	4	5	5	5	6	5	3	4	4	5
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107	6	1	3	6	1	5	4	5	6	6	1	5	1	5	2	1	6	5	6	4	5	3	1	6	5	1
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115	3	2	2	5	2	5	5	5	6	6	4	6	5	3	2	4	3	5	4	6	5	4	3	6	5	2
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119	2	1	2	5	2	4	2	3	6	6	2	6	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	5	5	3	1	2	5	3
120	1	2	1	4	1	5	4	6	5	5	3	4	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	6	5	2	3	2	5	1
121	3	1	3	3	3	2	5	3	5	4	3	4	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	5	5	2	1	2	5	4
122	4	2	3	6	4	5	3	6	5	5	4	4	3	3	2	1	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4

123	3	1	3	6	5	5	6	6	4	6	4	6	4	3	2	3	4	5	5	4	6	4	3	6	5	2	3
124	6	2	3	6	5	5	5	6	5	5	4	6	4	3	2	3	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	5	4	2	4
125	3	1	3	5	1	4	4	6	6	6	3	6	3	2	3	4	3	3	4	5	5	3	2	3	4	3	2
126	5	2	2	6	1	5	6	6	5	5	5	6	5	3	1	3	4	5	5	5	6	5	5	6	5	3	3
127	6	1	3	6	2	3	4	6	4	6	6	5	4	5	3	4	5	4	5	5	6	4	1	5	6	2	1
128	5	2	3	5	3	5	6	6	5	5	1	6	5	2	3	2	4	2	3	4	5	4	2	3	5	3	1
129	5	2	3	6	1	6	5	6	2	6	3	5	4	3	3	5	5	4	6	5	6	4	6	6	4	4	3
130	4	5	3	6	3	6	5	6	5	5	5	6	5	4	3	5	4	4	5	5	6	5	4	3	4	2	1
131	4	1	5	6	1	6	5	6	6	6	5	6	5	6	5	4	3	4	5	1	5	2	1	5	2	2	1
132	6	3	1	6	3	6	6	6	3	5	5	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	5	5	2	4
133	6	1	2	6	1	4	5	6	6	6	2	6	4	1	5	6	6	5	6	5	6	6	5	5	4	2	1
134	6	6	2	6	2	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	5	3	5	5	4	2	5	4	5	5	1	6	5	4	1
135	6	1	2	6	1	4	5	6	2	6	3	6	3	2	3	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	6	6	5	1	3
136	4	4	2	6	2	5	5	5	4	4	6	6	3	1	2	1	6	4	6	6	6	1	5	4	5	2	2
137	5	4	2	6	2	5	5	6	4	5	3	6	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	6	5	4	5	6	2	1
138	6	3	2	6	1	4	5	6	4	6	5	6	3	5	4	4	3	6	6	5	6	6	2	6	5	2	5
139	6	6	1	6	2	6	5	5	5	5	4	6	4	2	3	5	3	5	6	4	6	6	1	5	5	2	3
140	6	1	3	6	5	6	6	6	3	6	4	6	5	5	4	1	4	5	6	4	2	5	4	5	5	4	4
141	6	5	3	6	1	6	6	6	6	6	5	1	6	4	5	4	5	6	5	5	6	4	2	6	5	4	1
142	4	5	2	6	4	3	4	4	6	6	5	2	5	4	5	4	3	4	3	4	5	4	5	4	5	2	1
143	5	1	2	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	6	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	2	5	2	1	1
144	5	4	3	6	2	5	6	6	5	6	4	6	4	2	1	3	4	5	6	5	6	4	3	5	5	3	2
145	6	1	2	6	1	3	4	2	4	3	4	6	5	2	3	3	4	5	6	5	6	5	3	5	4	1	1
146	5	5	3	1	4	6	6	6	5	5	5	6	4	4	3	1	5	4	4	5	5	4	3	5	5	2	1
147	5	5	3	6	5	5	4	6	4	6	3	6	4	3	4	3	5	3	5	4	6	4	4	3	6	4	1
148	3	1	3	6	3	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	2	4	2	3	4	3	4	2	5	4	3	4	4	3	2
149	3	4	5	5	1	4	4	6	2	3	3	5	4	3	5	5	4	5	5	4	6	6	3	6	4	2	1
150	6	1	4	6	5	6	6	6	6	5	1	6	4	5	5	5	6	5	6	5	5	4	5	6	5	2	1

Response table 3 (Part 3)

ID	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
1							
2	1 4 3 2	7 1 3 5	1 3 2 4	1 3 2 5	1 3 4 2	1 3 2 5	
3	4 3 1 7	3 1 5 7	3 1 2 4	2 3 3 5	4 2 1 3	1 3 8	
4	1 3 4 6	7 1 5 2	3 1 2 4	1 2 2 3	1 2 4 3	1 2 3 5	
5	1 5 4 7	7 1 3 5	1 3 2 4	1 2 3 4	4 2 1 3	1 3 7 3	
6	3 4 1 6	2 7 1 3	2 1 5 4	3 2 4 1	1 2 3 4	2 1 3 6	
7	1 4 3 7	1 3 7 5	1 2 3 4	1 3 2 3	4 2 1	1 3 2 7	
8	1 4 6 7	1 5 7	1 3 2 4	2 3 1 3	2 3 3 4	1 3 2 7	
9	6 1 7 4	3 5 1 2	2 2 2 4	1 3 2 5	4 1 3 6	1 3 2 7	
10	7 6 3 1	3 2 7	3 2 1 4	2 5 3 3	1 2 4 4	1 7 3 2	
11	7 6 1 2	3 2 7	3 2 1 4	1 2 5 4	4 2 1 6	1 3 7 2	
12	4 7 4	3 1 5	1 2 3 4	1 3 3 2	2 3 4 6	3 2 7 5	
13	4 3 1 7	3 2 7 5	1 2 3 4	2 3 7 4	2 1 3 4	1 8 3 2	
	4 7 1 6	1 3 5 6	1 3 2 4	1 3 2 3	2 4 3 6	1 3 7 2	

14	3 7 1 4	2 3 1 6	2 3 1 4	3 2 1 4	2 1 4 3	3 2 7 8
15	1 7 4 3	7 1 3 5	1 3 2 4	2 1 3 4	2 3 6 1	3 2 1 7
16	1 5 3 4	1 3 2	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 5	4 1 3 2	1 3 7 3
17	4 1 3 7	5 1 7	3 1 2 4	1 3 3 2	3 1 2 4	1 7 3 3
18	7 1 6 3	1 3 2 5	3 2 1 4	1 3 2 5	1 6 2 3	1 2 3 5
19	1 6 3 7	3 2 7	2 3 2 4	2 5 3 3	2 1 6	1 3 2 7
20	1 7 3 4	7 1 3 5	1 1 3 4	3 4 3 5	4 1 2 3	1 2 7 3
21	1 3 7	7 3 5	1 3 2 4	2 1 3 5	4 1 3 6	1 2 3 7
22	1 4 3 7	7 1 3 5	1 2 2 4	2 4 1 3	4 2 6 3	1 3 2 7
23	1 3 4 7	7 1 3 5	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 3	4 1 3 2	1 3 7
24	1 7 2 6	3 1 7 5	1 3 1 4	1 3 2 3	4 1 2	1 2 7 3
25	1 7 5	3 1 7 5	2 3 1 4	1 3 2 3	4 1 2 6	1 2 7 3
26	1 3 4 1	7 1 3 5	3 4 1 4	1 5 3 2	1 3 2 4	1 3 2 3
27	1 4 6 7	1 3 7	2 3 1 4	1 4 2 3	4 1 2 3	1 4 3 5
28	1 4 6 7	7 1 3 2	2 1 3 4	1 2 3 5	4 1 2 3	1 3 2 7
29	1 4 6 7	1 3 7	2 3 1 4	1 4 2 3	4 1 2 3	1 3 2 7
30	1 7 4 2	7 1 4 2	1 1 2 4	1 2 3 5	4 2 3 3	1 3 7 2
31	1 7 3 2	2 4 7 3	2 3 1 4	1 2 3 5	4 3 2 3	1 3 2 7
32	7 1 3 4	1 2 7 3	1 3 2 4	2 3 1 6	2 1 3	1 2 3 6
33	1 7 3	3 1 2 7	1 3 2 4	1 2 6	4 3 6 1	2 7 3 5
34	1 5 3 7	3 1 5 7	1 2 4 3	1 3 2 3	4 1 2 3	1 2 3 7
35	1 5 7 6	3 1 7	1 2 3 4	1 2 5 3	2 5 3	1 3 5 7
36	1 6 5 7	3 2 5 7	1 3 4 3	1 3 2 3	4 3 6 1	1 2 3 6
37	1 7 3	3 1 7	1 3 2 4	1 2 5 3	4 1 2 6	1 3 7 2
38	4 7 5 3	3 1 5 7	1 2 3 4	1 3 3 2	4 3 3 6	1 2 3 7
39	4 7 1 6	3 1 7 2	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 5	4 6 3 3	1 7 2 3
40	5 1 7 4	3 1 5 7	1 3 2 4	1 3 2 3	1 2 3 3	1 5 2 4

41						
42	4351	3125	2134	6431	4136	4236
43	1576	3157	1243	1323	4123	1642
44	1764	713	1324	1423	4136	1323
45	1746	315	1243	3134	2351	1237
46	1476	1325	1234	1253	4236	1372
47	1432	1234	1324	1342	4231	4123
48	1746	7153	1324	1423	4136	1642
49	1,7,4,3	3,1,7	1234	1352	4336	7123
50	7,1,4	3157	1234	1253	4336	7321
51	7415	3157	1234	1352	4336	7123
52	8,9	4,3,1	1,1,1,2	1,3,7	7,3,8	8,6
53	9,1	8,4	4312	8,1	7,3,8	6,8
54	10,1	1,4	1342	1,8	7,8	9,6
55	1,1	9	1,1,1,2	1	4	8
56	1	8 8 4	1 1 1 1	1,8	3,7,8	9,8
57	4,11	34	1132	51	73	86
58	9 7	4 8	1 1 1 2	5 1	73 9	8 9
59	18	43	1243	1 5	7 5 3	8 6
60	11,7	41	1132	5,12	7 5 3	8 6
61	11,3	5 4	2 1 3 4	3 9	7 8	10,8
62	8 9	4 8	1111	2 1	3 5	11
63	12	4 5	1321	9 1	3 7 8	11,8
64	11 8	1 3	1111	1	5 8	11
65	8 1	4 3	1243	3 5	5 7 8	8 6
66	4 8	5 6	1243	1 3	6 7	8
67	3 11	6 1	3142	5 3	3 7	9 6
67	13 9	7	1112	2	8 1	8 12

68																
	10	9	1	4	8	12	11	3	1	9	5	7	8	8	6	
69	1			10		1	3	2	4	3				12	6	
70	14		9	4	3	14	3	2		5	1	3	7	8	10	8
71	1			1		12	1	2		1		10		11		
72	3	5		9	11	11	1	2		1	9	10	3	8	11	9
73	4		1	1	9	11	1	1	1	9	4	8		11		
74	5	10		4	10	12	3	4		9	4	7		8	6	
75	1	8		4	3	13	2	4		1	4	3	7	8	8	
76	1	4		4	1	11	3	4		1		7	5	12	6	
77	1	7		4	8	2	1	3	2	4	1	5		11		
78	8		9	4	1	12	4	3		3	1	5	7	8	8	6
79	14	6		4	12	12	4	3		4	3	3	8	7	8	
80	9	1		4	1	11	1	2		5	1	3	7	8	6	8
81	9	1		4	8	11	3	2		5	1	3	7	8	2	6
82	12			4	12	12	4	3		11		10		11		
83	12	1		3	6	12	3	3		1	4	11	10	8		
84	11		15	5	8	14	3	2		3	1	3	5	12	8	
85	12	1		6	1	1	2	4	3	3	1	11	3	7	8	6
86	8		9	6	1	1	2	4	3	3	1	5	7	11	8	6
87	6		8	1	4	12	4	3		11	5	11	10	8	6	
88	8		9	1	6	11	2	2		5	1	7	5	8	12	8
89	1	8		8	4	1	2	1	1	3	1	5	7	8	12	8
90	12	1		3	1	13	4	2		4	5	5	7	8	8	6
91	13	11		5	3	1	1	2	3	2	11	10	7	5	8	6
92	12			6	1	1	2	2	3	3	5	3	7	9	8	
93	11	8		5	4	1	1	3	2	1	9	7	11	2	9	
94	1		12	1	3	1	1	3	2	1		3	9	9	12	

95	10	15	6	4	1 1 2 3	3 5	3	8	2	6
	8									
96	11		5	3	1 1 2 3	5 2	3 7 11	6	8	
	8									
97	12	1	1		1 2 4 3	3 1	7 8 3	9	8	
98	11		4	1	1 1 1 1	4 3	3	8	6	
	1									
99	10	8	8	1	1 1 2 1	11 5	3 7 8	12	6	
100	12	10	4	3	1 1 2 3	3 1	3 5 8	9	6	
101	10	11	15	1 3 6 5	1 1 2 2	1 8	8 3	6 3	12	
102	12	14	1	3 1	1 2 3 4	1 8	6 11 7	9	8	
103	15	11	8	3 1	1 1 3 2	1 4	5 7 2	12	13	
104	10	11	12	1 3	1 1 2 2	1 11	11 5 7	6	1	
105	9	8	11	3	1 1 2 1	3 1	3 9	8	6	
106	6	16	6	12	1 1 2 1	1	6 7	8	9	
107	12	1	3	1	1 1 1 1	1 11	3 9	12	6	
108	1	11	1	3	1 1 2 3	1 4	7 5	8	6	
109	13	1	4	1	1 1 2 3	3 4	3 8	8	6	
110	9	11	1	12	1 1 2 1	8 1	3 7	8	6	
111	1	8	12	13	1 1 2 3	1 4	5 7 11	12	9	
112	4	15	1	4	1 1 2 2	1	3 7	6	12	
113	14	1	1	3 6	1 1 3 4	11 5	8 7	8	6	
114	1	11	4	6	1 1 1 1	5 1	8 7	12	6	
115	1	11	5	1	1 1 1 3	1 4	5 7	12	6	
116	1	16	1		1 1 2 1	9 5	3 5	8	6	
117	9	10	13	1	2 1 2 3	1 5	8	8		
118	1	9	6		1 1 2 3	1 3	8	12		
119	16	12	6	1	1 1 1 1	4 1	1 6	9	12	
120	11	12	4	1	3 2 1 1	1 5	8 7	8	6	

121							
	16	9	4 1 6	1 1 1 1	1	3 5	8 6
122							
	15	11	5 3 1	1 2 1 1	1	8 3	2 1
123							
	1	11	1 3	1 1 2 3	1 9	5 7 8	8 6
124							
	12	16	5 3	2 1 4 3	2 1 3	5 3	12 9
125							
	12		6 1	1 1 2 3	11	7	8 6
126							
	1	11	3 2 6	1 1 1 1	1 5	12 8	8 9 6
127							
	12	8	6 4	1 1 2 2	1 9	3 7 5	8
128							
	1	11 8	8 1	4 3 1 2	9 1	7 5 8	12 6
129							
	15	8	1 8	1 1 1 2	1 4	7 5 8	8 6
130							
	11	8	1 3	1 1 1 1	1 11	7 5 8	8 12
131							
	11	4	4 12	1 1 2 3	1 3	3 8	6 12
132							
	12	15	4 1	1 2 1 3	1	7 8	8 9
133							
	1	9	12 1	1 1 2 3	8 1	3 7	6 12
134							
	1	8	3 4	1 1 2 3	1 4	7 5 9	6 12
135							
	11	12	1 8	1 1 1 1	3 1 4	3 9 7 8	9
136							
	14	9	1 3	1 1 1 1	1 9	7 5 8	6 8
137							
	12	11	4 3	1 1 1 1	5 1	5 3 9 7	9
138							
	1		6	1 3 1 2	1 4	2	8
139							
	1	12	1 8	1 1 2 3	11 5	3 5 7	9 6
140							
	6	1 9	12	1 1 1 1	1 5	3 7	14 8
141							
	12	9	4	1 1 1 1	1 3	7 8 5	6 12
142							
	1	11	6 3	1 1 2 1	4 1	7 8 3	6 8
143							
	6	14	4 1	2 1 3 4	1 9	3 8 7	8 14
144							
	1	12	6 3	1 2 1 1	1 3	12	14
145							
	12	13	5 1	1 1 1 1	1 5	3 8	8 6
146							
	8	10	4 8	1 1 1 1	1 9	8 5	8
147							
	16	1	4	1 1 1 2	1	1	4

148	1	10	4	1 1 1 1	1 9	3	14	8
149	1	11	4	1 1 1 2	1 9	10 3	14	9
150	9	1	6	1 2 1 1	1	7 5	12	6

NB: While tabulating responses, only number/s from the list below can be written in the above table because of limited space.

Q. N. (44)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1= scolding | 2= indifference |
| 3=punishment | 4= encouragement |
| 5= out of home | 6= insult |
| 7= consoling | 8= sending foreign country |
| 9= force to do marriage | 10= biting |
| 11= angry | 12= unfulfillment of needs and demands |
| 13= stop sending to school | 14= compel to work at home |
| 15= teasing | 16= neglect |

Q. N. (45)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1= job opportunity | 2= certificates |
| 3= prestige | 4= further study |
| 5= intellectual | 6= carrier |
| 7= gate keeper | 8= license |
| 9= iron gate/golden gate | 10 requirement for abroad study and work |
| 11= for parents | 12=to prevent doing wrong activity |
| 13= happiness | |

Q. N. (46)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1= It opens the door to higher education | 2= It opens the door to job opportunity |
|--|---|

3= It raises prestige in the society track

4= It prevents students from going into a wrong

Q. N. (47)

1= suicide

2= leaving home

3=addiction

4= abnormal behavior/loneliness

5= mentally sick/ill

6= humiliation

7= mad

8=eloping

9=early marriage

10=go to work in abroad

11= may involve in criminal activities

Q. N. (48)

1=poverty

2= lack of awareness

3= family pressure/scolding

4= narrow thinking

5= fair

6= society

7=stress

8=pair pressure to wrong work

9= school's pressure

10= humiliation

11= helplessness

12 = fair of joblessness

Q. N. (49)

1= education

2=social awareness

3=economic improvement

4=normalization of SLC

5= inter evaluation

6=alternative solution / skill development training

7= broad thinking

8= encouragement

9= consoling

10=more chances to rewrite it

11= need to send back to school

12= understanding of their problems

13= provide suitable job

14= counseling

NB: 50= Not enough responses obtained

Appendix 7
Sample of Students' Responses
प्रश्नावली

यो प्रश्नावली S.L.C. परीक्षाले निम्त्याउने नकारात्मक परिणामसँग सम्बन्धित छ । यसबाट सङ्कलित उत्तरहरु केवल अनुसन्धान प्रयोजनका लागि मात्र लागु गरिनेछ र यसबाट अथवा, यसमा कुनै पनि सहभागीहरुको परिचय खुल्नेछैन र आफुलाई लागेका र आफुले बुझेका कुराहरु स्पष्ट र यथार्थ रूपमा प्रस्तुत गर्नुहुन अनुरोध गर्दछु ।

भाग - १

१. तपाईं छात्र हो की छात्रा ? छात्र छात्रा
२. तपाईं कति वर्षको हुनु भयो? १६ वर्ष
३. तपाईं आफुलाई कुन सम्प्रदाय भित्र राख्नुहुन्छ ?
क) मंगोल ख) आर्यन ग) दलित घ) तराइवासी ङ) अन्य
४. तपाईंको मातृभाषा के हो ? नेपाली
५. के तपाईंले यसभन्दा अगाडि पनि S.L.C. परीक्षा दिनु भएको छ ?
 छ छैन
६. तपाईं कहिल्यै कुनै परीक्षामा असफल हुनुभएको छ ?
 छ छैन
७. के तपाईंको परिवारमा स्कूल जाने पहिलो सदस्य तपाईं हो ?
 हो होइन
८. तपाईंको बुबा-आमाले कतिसम्म पढ्नुभएको छ ?
बुबा: S.L.C. भन्दा तल S.L.C. पास निरक्षर
 P.C.L. पास B.A. भन्दा माथि
आमा: S.L.C. भन्दा तल S.L.C. पास निरक्षर
 P.C.L. पास B.A. भन्दा माथि
९. तपाईंले कक्षा १० मा लिनु भएकु ऐच्छिक विषयहरु के-के हुन् ?
क) र. प्रयोग ख) र. भाषा ग)
१०. तपाईंको कक्षा १० मा सरदर कति प्रतिशत हाजिरी होला ?
क) १००% ख) ८०%-९०% ग) ६०%-७९% घ) ६०% भन्दा कम
११. तपाईं स्कूल पढ्न जानुको पछाडि कुनै स्पष्ट कारण छ ?
 छ छैन
यदि छ भने प्रष्ट पारिदिनुहुन्छ कि सिद्धित फलन र परिवारलाई पाल्न
१२. तपाईंले अधिल्ला कक्षाहरुमा सरदर कति प्रतिशतसम्म अड्क हाँसिल गर्न भएको थियो ?
क) ६०% कक्षा ४ ख) ४५% कक्षा-५ ग) ४६% कक्षा-६ घ) ६७% कक्षा-७
ङ) ६०% कक्षा-८ च) ६९% कक्षा-९
१३. तपाईंले यसपाली S.L.C. परीक्षामा कति प्रतिशतसम्म अंक ल्याउनु होला भन्ने अनुमान गर्नु भएको छ ?
क) ९०% भन्दा माथि ख) ८०-८९% ग) ६०-७९% घ) ४५% - ५९%
ङ) ३२% - ४४% च) ३२% भन्दा कम ।

१४. तपाईंले घरमा पढाईको अलावा काम पनि गर्नुपर्छ ?
 पर्छ पर्दैन
१५. तपाईं घरमा सरदर कति घण्टा पढ्नुहुन्छ ? ...५... घण्टा
१६. तपाईं पढाईको अलावा अन्य कुनै रोजगारी अथवा पेशा गर्नुहुन्छ ?
 क) गर्छु ख) गर्दिन
१७. तपाईं S.L.C. तयारीका लागि स्कूलभन्दा अन्य तयारी कक्षाहरु जस्तै Coaching, Tutition जस्ता कक्षाहरु पनि लिदैहुनुहुन्छ ?
 छ छैन

भाग २

तलका प्रश्नको उत्तर दिनका लागि १ देखि ६ सम्मका अंकहरु कायम गरिएको छ जसमा १ ले ०% (पटकै छैन/होइन), २ ले २०%, ३ ले ४०%, ४ ले ६०%, ५ ले ८०% र ६ ले १००% (एकदमै हो/छ) भन्ने जनाउछ। कुन चाहिँ सबैभन्दा उपयुक्त सम्भावित उत्तर लाग्छ, त्यसमा गोलो लगाएर उत्तर दिनुहोस्।

१८. तपाईंले S.L.C. परीक्षा तयारीमा बुबाआमाबाट पूर्ण सहयोग पाउनु भएको छ ?
 → पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ पूर्ण सहयोग छ।
१९. तपाईंले S.L.C. परीक्षाको तयारीमा स्कूल प्रशासन र शिक्षकहरुबाट पूर्ण सहयोग पाउनु भएको छ ?
 → पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ पूर्ण सहयोग छ।
२०. के S.L.C. परीक्षा तपाईंका लागि धेरै नै महत्वपूर्ण छ ?
 → पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै नै छ।
२१. के तपाईंका शिक्षकहरु मिलनसार हुनुहुन्छ ?
 → पटकै हुनुहुन्न, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै मिलनसार हुनुहुन्छ।
२२. के अभिभावकहरुले S.L.C. परीक्षा अगाडि अथवा तयारीका क्रममा आफ्ना छोरा-छोरीलाई राम्रै नतिजा ल्याउनुपर्छ भनेर दबाव दिन्छन् ?
 → पटकै दिनुहुन्न, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै दिनुहुन्छ।
२३. के स्कूल प्रशासन र शिक्षकहरुले पनि उनीहरुका विद्यार्थीहरुलाई S.L.C. परीक्षा तयारीका क्रममा राम्रै नतिजा ल्याउनुपर्छ भनेर दबाव दिने गर्दछन् ?
 → पटकै दिदैनन्, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ पूर्ण रुपमा दिन्छन्।
२४. के S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुत्तीर्ण विद्यार्थीहरुका लागि अन्य कुनै वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था गरिनु राम्रो हो ?
 → पटकै हैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै राम्रो हो।
 → यदि राम्रो हो भने किन ? उनीहरुलाई योग्य बनाउन।
२५. के S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुत्तीर्ण गर्ने विद्यार्थीहरुमा नकारात्मक परिणामहरु जस्तै लागुपदार्थ सेवन, आत्महत्या गर्ने जस्ता अवस्था सृजनना गर्न प्रमुख भुमिका खेल्ने तत्वहरुमध्ये गरिवी पनि एउटा मुख्य तत्व हो ?
 → होइन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै हो।
२६. S.L.C. परीक्षालाई अनावश्यक रुपमा महत्व दिएर यसलाई हार्डगुजी बनाइएको छ भन्छन् नी, के यो सत्य हो ?
 → होइन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ हो।
२७. के S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुत्तीर्ण विद्यार्थीहरु बढीमात्रमा अपराधिक क्रियाकलाप र लागुऔषध सेवनमा लाग्ने बढी सम्भावना हुन्छ भन्छन नि के त्यो सत्य हो ?
 → हैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै हो।

२८. S.L.C परीक्षाको नतिजा, अभिभावक, प्र.अ. शिक्षक तथा विद्यार्थीको ईज्जतसग जोडिएको हुन्छ?
→ होइन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै हो।
२९. तपाईं आफ्नो शिक्षकसग पढाईको बारेमा छलफल गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ कहिलै गर्दिन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै गर्छु।
३०. तपाईं स्कूल समयभन्दा बाहेक आफ्ना साथीहरूसग कतिको सम्पर्क गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ कहिलै गर्दिन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै गर्छु।
३१. तपाईं गृहकार्य गर्दा कतिको साथीहरूसग सँगै बसेर गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ कहिलै गर्दिन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै गर्छु।
३२. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको तयारी साथीहरूसगै बसेर गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ सधै सँगै बस्छु।
३३. तपाईं आफ्नो क्षमतालाई कसरी मुल्यांकन गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ एकदमै कमजोर, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै राम्रो।
३४. तपाईंले आफ्ना शिक्षकहरूसग कतिको Feed Back पाउने गर्नु भएको छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै पाउँछु।
३५. के गृहकार्य र आन्तरिक परीक्षहरूसग पाउने feed back तपाईंको लागि महत्वपूर्ण छन?
→ छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छन।
३६. तपाईं परीक्षाको विशेषगरी S.L.C. परीक्षाको दबावलाई व्यवस्थापन गर्ने आफ्नो शिपलाई कसरी मुल्यांकन गर्नुहुन्छ?
→ एकदमै कमजोर, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ धेरै राम्रो।
३७. तपाईं S.L.C परीक्षामा सफलता हासिल गर्नु कतिको उत्साहित हुनुहुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
३८. के तपाईंको घरमा S.L.C. परीक्षाको लागि चाहिने उपयुक्त वातावरण छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
३९. के तपाईंको घरमा S.L.C. परीक्षाको लागि विद्यालयले दिएको सेवा प्रति सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
४०. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको लागि शिक्षकले गरेको सरसहयोग वा सेवा प्रति सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
४१. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको तयारी कुनै तनावमा रहेर गर्नु हुन्छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
यदी तनाव छ भने, कस्तो खालको तनाव हो? जस्तै: डर, चिन्ता,
S.L.C परीक्षामा तयारीभन्दा धेरै तनाव भएर चिन्ता लागेको छ।
४२. के नेपालको S.L.C. परीक्षा प्रणाली विश्वसनिय छ?
→ पटकै छैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै छ।
४३. के तपाईं S.L.C. परीक्षाको उत्तरपुस्तिकाहरु निष्पक्ष रूपमा परिक्षण गरिन्छ भन्ने लाग्छ?
→ पटकै लाग्दैन, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६ एकदमै लाग्छ।

भाग-३

४४. S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुतिर्ण विद्यार्थीहरूका अभिभावकहरूको प्रतिक्रिया उनीहरूका छोराछोरी प्रति कस्तो हुने गर्दछ? (जस्तै: गाली गर्ने, प्रोत्साहन गर्ने, रिसाउने, आदि ।) आफूले थाहापुएका कुराहरू लेख्नुहोस। क) गाली गर्ने ख) प्रोत्साहन गर्ने ग) रिसाउने
घ) विदेश पठाइ दिने ड) शिरने च) छिट्याउने
४५. तपाईंलाई S.L.C. किन महत्वपूर्ण छ जस्तो लाग्छ? (जस्तै: gate keeper, iron gate, जागिरको लागि नभई नहुने भएर, आदि ।) आफूलाई लागेका कुराहरू लेख्नुहोस। क) उच्च शिक्षाको आधार ख) इज्जत पाउने ग) जागिर पाउने
घ) विहोको माइरोस ड) राम्रो बाटो तर्फ हिंडने च) शुल्क
४६. तपाईंलाई तल दिइएका S.L.C. परीक्षासंग अथवा यसको महत्वसंग सम्बन्धित विचारहरूमध्ये कुन चाहिँ एकदमै महत्वपूर्ण र कुन चाहिँ कम महत्वपूर्ण छ? ठिक क्रममा लेख्नुहोस ।
क) १ यसले उच्च शिक्षाको लागि बाटो खुल्ला गर्छ ।
ख) १ यसले जागिर पाउनमा ठूलो शुभिका खेल्छ ।
ग) १ यसले समाजमा इज्जत बढाउछ ।
घ) १ यसले विद्यार्थीलाई गलत बाटोमा लाग्नबाट बचाउछ ।
४७. तपाईंको विचारमा के कस्ता कारणले गर्दा S.L.C. परीक्षामा अनुतिर्ण हुने विद्यार्थीहरू गलत कार्य गर्न बाध्य हुन्छन अथवा गर्ने गर्दछन? तपाईंलाई मनमा लागेका कुराहरू लेख्नुहोस ।
क) विहोताले ख) गलत माइनातले ग) इच्छा
घ) घर/स्कूलको गालीले
४८. तपाईंलाई S.L.C. परीक्षाको नतिजासंग सम्बन्धित के कस्ता दुःखद समाचारहरू सुन्नु भएको छ?
क) आत्महत्या गर्ने ख) दुःखतमा फस्ने ग) पागल भन्ने
घ) चौर डाका खल्ने
४९. तपाईंको विचारमा S.L.C. परीक्षा अनुतिर्ण भएपछि विद्यार्थीहरूले गर्ने विभिन्न खालका नकारात्मक कार्यहरूलाई कम गर्न वा रोक्न के गर्नुपर्छ जस्तो लाग्छ? आफ्नो विचारहरू शब्दमा लेख्नुहोस ।
क) होपला दिने ख) सिप फिकाउने ग) समाझा हुने
घ) सहायुभूति दिने
५०. अन्त्यमा S.L.C. परीक्षाको बारेमा तपाईंलाई आफ्नो मनमा लागेका कुराहरू सेयर गर्न चाहानुहुन्छ भने तल लेख्नुहोस ।

S.L.C. परीक्षा भनेको हामी विद्यार्थीको एक पहिचान हुने खड्का बाटो हो। र S.L.C.ले हामीलाई राम्रो बाटो, राम्रो काममा सहयोग गर्ने गर्दछ। S.L.C. परीक्षाले हामीलाई उच्च शिक्षा तर्फ धोर्नायाउने गर्दछ।

सहयोगको लागि धन्यवाद
योगेन्द्र बहादुर भट्टराई

Appendix 8
Themes of Qualitative Data
Appendix 8.1
Preliminary Coding

Teachers

Teacher -1	Teacher -2
Academic experience	Academic experience
SLC related experience	SLC related various experience
Maths teacher	English Teacher
Political invasion in education	Importance of SLC
Deprive of administrative experience	Sensitive guardian
Overemphasis on SLC	Additional preparation for SLC
Magnification of SLC impact	Ample exercise for SLC
"Iron Gate"	SLC as a gatekeeper
Defined as 10-year investment	Signifies literacy
Unreliable exam system	Job opportunity
Happiness and self-pride	Higher education
Marking errors	Prestige and face
Cheating in SLC	Reward and punishment for schools
Cheating affects innocent	Political invasion in education
Politics ruins education system	Cheating tradition of SLC exam
Low expectation of weak students	Guardians promote cheating
High expectation of talented	SLC failures left home
Deliberate seat planning effect	SLC failures involved in crime
Exam environment causes suicide	SLC failure committed suicide
Top-down and bottom-up blaming system	Several unreported cases of suicides
Poverty of Nepal	Unnecessarily highlighted SLC exam
Exam-driven fever on parents	"SLC has been propagandized"
High expectation of parents	"Ten years' investment"
Parents' behaviour	Prestigious issues
Teacher-parent pressure on students	Unfair exam system
Teacher-parent ambition	Exam fraud
Prestige and face	Guardians' misunderstanding
Struggle for saving face and prestige	Freedom in choice of courses
Teacher-parent pressure on students	No alternatives for failures
Lack of teaching materials	Negligence of government
Lack of advanced technology	Improvement in exam system and marking procedures
"Power cut-off"	Injustice to skillful and talented students
"Decreasing pass percentage"	Answer books are not marked sincerely
Hopeless future	Subjective question type is problematic
"Political turmoil"	Need of skill-based education
Drastic change required	
Demolition of SLC exam	

Principals

Principal - 1

Principal - 2

<p>Experienced teacher and administrator SLC as a national exam Send-up evaluates ability SLC Board runs SLC exam Preparation for SLC Low SLC pass percent 48% pass rate in 2012 in average 80-85% private school pass % 25-30% public school pass % <i>Sarkari Kam Kahile Jala Gham</i> Science teacher SLC as an "Iron Gate" Opens doors of job, Foreign job opportunity Opens doors for higher education Great achievement in life Provides great excitement Recurrent failing causes suicides Some become regular drug user, Failure lives miserable life Low paid jobs Existing education Door closed for higher education Wrong States' education policy Produces more failures than success Weakness of school teachers and administrators, 50% results save schools and teachers Traditional society Transitional situation of Nepal Dark life after failing SLC No more opportunity Dream is finished after failing, Humiliated if failed No any other options Suicide as an options SLC as a mandatory requirements Unnecessarily highlighted Parents involve in wrong activities Education system should be improved</p>	<p>Teaching and administrative experiences Various experiences (marking, questions making, invigilating) Became the best superintendent SLC as an "Iron Gate" "SLC exam dominated curriculum" Unwanted activities Illegal and immoral activities, Threatening environment for teachers and administrators Slowly improving Women were not allowed to be educated in the past, Only few used to pass the SLC exam SLC passed student as a role model Large participation in SLC, A national exam Important High pass percentage than other exams in Nepal Stakes of certificate Limits job opportunities Board toppers used to be announced, Top students get scholarship A hidden competition still exists Topper are used for advertisement by colleges Examinees sometimes give birth to babies at exam hall 70-80 -year old people write exams People keen on taking SLC for 25-30 times Victim of mental problems, Heard news about suicide Successful become delighted SLC become a topics of hot debate Hot debate for weeks makes the SLC exam sensational Rises self-esteem and ambition "Parents' verbal treatment is responsible" "All parents are not educated and wise." "SLC exam is everything Separation from classmates</p>
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<p>Need of overall improvements SLC should not be barrier to student</p>	<p>Ambition is maximized by their parents and schools, Dream of better life is magnified by schools and parents victim of self-humiliation School environment is responsible Dream of personal freedom in college Failure prevents them from practicing freedom, Lack of alternatives to failures " SLC exam is all in all" "Lack of alternative vocational education" State should provide vocational training Alternative provides opportunities to live a better life without passing SLC exam Ineffective programs Defective Policy People's new perspectives Modification of existing education system Elimination of all-subjects pass provision Categorization based on skills, interests and expertise can be alternatives Pass-fail system has to be removed It eradicates suicides Students' skills and talents have to be identified Skill and talent based education should be given Policy makers' responsibility "Doors of opportunity is opened to a handful people Closed to a vast majority" State has to change the existing policy to take a leap in education sector</p>
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Parents

Parent - 1

Parent - 2

<p>SLC as important exam Door opener for higher education Door opener for job "Unauthorized license for marriage for women "Outcome of ten-year-long</p>	<p>Kids taken SLC exam "Largest exam" Necessity for Nepal Job opportunity Door opener for foreign country Door opener for higher education "Sufferer of the SLC exam"</p>
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<p>hard work" Difficulty of past Lack of facility Heard suicide cases Watchful to children Lack of good counseling Unexpected results cause suicide Pressure of parents Prestigious issues Pressure of school Lack of good counseling Waste of investment Parents under pressure during result period</p>	<p>Joined Nepalese Army after failing SLC Two sons passed the SLC One waiting for results SLC as <i>a scary monster</i> <i>(Haunguji)</i> Parents' crucial role Children's nervousness Counseling needed Responsible guardian, Managed required teaching materials, Managed coaching classes Heard suicide cases Poverty as a reason Homely environments Household works causes low performances Failure panicked them and commit suicide Parents' threaten to exile Suicide as a better option Responsibility all stakeholders, Respectful learning environment Inspiration special attention to children Provided learning and preparing environment Encouraged them to study Made them prepare to tolerate if unexpected results occur Made them aware Outcome of ten years' investment Door openers for higher education Efficient management</p>
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Students

Student- 1	Student - 2
<p>Current grade 10 student Mentally prepared for SLC exam Utilizing times Early for preparation Outcome of ten years of hard work "Iron Gate" Job opportunity Certificates' stakes Shares results with family first and then friends Shares both positive and negative results Likes feedback</p>	<p>SLC failed experience Second attempt Waiting for SLC results Hopeful for positive results Prepared well SLC as an " Iron Get" Doors to Higher education Requirements for jobs Certificate's stakes Shares exam result first with family "Shares both good and bad exam results"</p>

<p>Upsets couple of times due to unexpected results Shares sad stories with family members Seen limitless happiness of SLC success students Heard sad news Suicide cases due to SLC failures Low results don't harm students Failure is more serious Weaknesses in marking Unexpected results due to carelessness Highly competitive environment among friends Feeling of humiliation causes suicides Homely environment causes suicide Parents terrify children Parents threaten children for banishment from home Girls are threatened to get ready to get married Failing in SLC as a failure in life Dark future ahead Schools and parents make SLC <i>a giant white elephant in a room/ (Haunguji)</i> Parents and school are responsible for suicides Homely environment should be good Free from household chores Let children work without pressure Schools should pay attention from the very beginning MOE should bring effective programs Answer-book should be checked fairly and sincerely It saves life of hundreds of innocent students</p>	<p>Sad SLC result was shared with aunt No other exam failure experiences Last years' result panicked her, "She could not believe her eyes" Depressed Parents scolded and questioned Cried for four days without going out On the fourth day parents consoled her Relatives consoled her Got new energy and felt comfortable No contact with teachers after SLC exam Heard sad news about SLC results "SLC failures committed suicide" Many students commit suicide every year Many become regular drug user Fully concentration on study "Depressed and panicked if they fail in spite of their hard work" Parents shouldn't scold the failures Self-humiliation among friends SLC system should be improved Crucial role of parents Exam should be conducted fairly Teachers should be friendly Panicked students can share with friendly teachers Monitoring should be regular and effective. Supportive environment is needed Answerbook should be marked fairly/sincerely A single mistake ruins student's life SLC should not be made <i>a scary monster</i></p>
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Student - 3	Student- 4
<p>Current grade 10 student Novice for SLC exam Taking coaching classes More homework and class activities Exam focus teaching "I spend more time in study than household work" SLC as an Important exam Stakes of certificate SLC is associated with face and prestige</p>	<p>Current grade 10 student Written SLC exam twice Preparation started Taking tuition and coaching classes Working hard SLC as an important exam SLC measures literacy Closes doors of job/higher education Opens doors for high-pay jobs Shares results first with friends</p>

<p> Failure results in self-humiliation SLC failure as a sign of illiteracy Shares results first with friends and then friends Shares both positive and negative results Good student Gets encouragements from parents Once got upset Encouragement Witness of no any bad incident Heard and read suicide cases Suicide due to family's reason Can't tolerate parents' rude behavior Associated with prestige Good homely environment "Children should not be scolded if they fail the exam" Teachers should not pressurize Regularize coaching classes Class should be well-managed Reading atmosphere Answerbook should be marked correctly Markers have to give justice to examinees </p>	<p> Shares both good and bad results Failed SLC exam twice Started hard job Panicked due to tough job Became drug user Joined Christianity Got rid of bad habit Rejoined school, Shares results first with friends Seen an incident of mentally shocked person, Treated in hospital Still under medication Suicide due to SLC failure Lack of course choices Imposed uninterested subjects Option to escape from difficult courses reduces suicide Multiple SLC attempts ruins tolerance, Poverty causes suicide, Waste of investment causes suicide No alternative causes suicide Healthy academic environment Course choice options Good parents' behavior Identification of root cause Feedback from teachers Good counseling Parent should be educated Friendly teacher Students share problems with friendly teachers Teachers can deter suicide </p>
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Appendix 8.2
Theme Categories Related to Research Questions

(A) Factors that Contribute to Make the SLC Exam Important and Sensational

- (i) Hot debate and discussions
- (ii) Prestige and face
- (iii) A door to higher education
- (iv) A door to job opportunity
- (v) National Level Exam
- (vi) First performance measurement exam
- (vii) End of school exam or school leaving exam
- (viii) Historical importance
- (ix) General social value
- (x) Mass/Large participation
- (xi) 10 years' outcome
- (xii) Sensational stories for mass media
- (xiii) Lack of alternatives
- (xiv) Recognition as an educated person in the society
- (xv) Required for graduation

(B) Negative Consequences of the SLC Exam Result on Test-takers

- (i) Immoral and unethical activities
- (ii) Exam fraud
- (iii)) Loss of motivation, confidence and self-esteem
- (iv) Criminal activity
- (v) Suicide
- (vi) Drug use
- (vii) Negative perception to education
- (viii) Depression and mental illnesses
- (ix) Memorization
- (x) Danger of loss of giftedness and skills
- (xi) Blue-collar and low paid jobs
- (xii) Living a miserable life
- (xiii) Working in foreign countries
- (xiv) Cheating tradition
- (xv) Violent attack.

(C) Issues that Contribute to the Negative Consequences of the SLC Exam Results

- (i) Fall of a dream to higher education
- (ii) Fall of a dream to job opportunity
- (iii) Societal value of education
- (iv) Poverty
- (v) Job-orientated Nepalese Perception
- (vi) Investment in education
- (vii) Prestige and face
- (viii) Nightmare life without education

- (ix) Lack of alternatives
- (x) Role of school administration, teachers and parents
- (xi) Role of Mass media
- (xii) Competitiveness and feeling of self-humiliation
- (xiii) Societal structure of Nepal- collectivistic society
- (xiv) Marriage culture of Nepal
- (xv) Social stigma as an illiterate person.

(D) Deterrent Factors for the Negative Consequences of the SLC Exam Results

- (i) By stopping overemphasis and exaggeration of SLC exam
- (ii) By opening doors to higher education for unsuccessful students
- (iii) Practical and vocational education to unsuccessful students
- (iv) Respectful and responsible homely environment
- (v) Respectful and responsible school environment
- (vi) Friendly behavior of teachers
- (vii) Change in question patterns
- (viii) Improvement in marking system
- (ix) Enough choice of optional subjects/courses
- (x) Need of counseling to teachers, parents and students
- (xi) Settlement of *a scary monster (a scary beast)*
- (xii) Shift of SLC Board Exam
- (xiii) Alternative to SLC exam
- (xiv) Minimization of stakes of SLC exam
- (xv) Stress management sessions to students
- (xvi) Demolition of '*gatekeeper*' or '*iron gate*'

THE END