

## Exploring Students' Perception of English Language Education in Private and Public Schools of Gorkha District

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### Abstract:

**Introduction:** Although English is the most often studied second language worldwide, there is less emphasis on it in Nepalese government schools due to poor resource allocation. Nepalese education system is divided into private and public schools. Regardless of the style of school, teaching strategies have a substantial impact on students' performance. So, this study aims to assess the education technique applied in selected public and private schools of Gorkha district.

**Methods:** This study employed a descriptive cross-sectional quantitative research design, selecting 422 students of class 9 and 10 from public and private schools in Gorkha district of Gandaki Province, Nepal by using a self-administered questionnaire for data collection and SPSS version 20 for data analysis.

**Results:** The findings suggest that students' language learning experiences and perceptions can be influenced by the teaching methods employed by their schools. Lecture-based teaching appears to be more common in public schools, while private schools tend to adopt a more varied approach with a greater emphasis on interactive activities. These differences may have implications for students' language acquisition and overall engagement in the learning process.

**Conclusion:** This study can guide educators, school administrators, and policymakers in developing strategies to enhance English language education and support students in their language learning journey.

**Keywords:** *Nepalese students, English Language, Private school, Public school*

## Introduction

Education in the 21st century is a basic need for developing individuals, society, and the nation, as it broadens perspectives and cultivates productive and disciplined citizens for overall progress(1). The Ministry of Education (MoE) in Nepal is responsible for the education system, which has undergone changes from the previous Indian-based three-tier-sixteen-year system to the current four-phase system consisting of primary, lower secondary, secondary (SEE), and higher secondary education (2).

In Nepal, education is divided into public/government and private/boarding schools, with approximately 16% of enrollment in private schools at the basic education level and 29% in higher secondary schools. In Gorkha, the majority of students, around 70%, attend private schools (3). English, being the most widely learned second language globally, lacks emphasis in Nepalese government schools, with limited attention given to teaching methods and insufficient resources, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, low motivation among public school teachers contributes to higher absenteeism and decreased performance (4).

Teaching methods significantly impact student performance regardless of school type. Effective education is achieved when teachers establish connections between students, engage parents and community partners, and facilitate open communication for effective learning and skill development (5). Traditional teaching methods, such as lectures and homework assignments (6), are still prevalent in many schools despite the availability of various educational techniques like group discussions, presentations, and exhibits (7). The demand of English language has been increasing but the standard of teaching and learning English language has been decreased (8).

The condition is pitiable in developing country like Nepal where there are explosion of population, lack of adequate resources, lack of participation of private sector, political instability, scarcity of qualified teachers, and ineffective management in the education sector (9). The government school teachers lack the same qualification as those private school teachers (10). Also, commonly in rural parts of the country, students from public schools are not willing to study seriously neither their parents encourage them to study increasing the gap in academic qualifications between public school students and private school students. Hence, this study aims to assess the education technique applied in selected public and private schools of Gorkha district.

## Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional quantitative research design was used in this study. The study selected public and private schools of Gorkha district of Gandaki Province, Nepal. A total 422 students from class 9 and 10 were taken as sample population in both public (211 students) and private school (211 students). Self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data and SPSS version 20 was used for data analysis. Administrative consent and assent were taken before data collection.

## Results

### Socio-demographic Information

**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.**

Socio-demographic characteristics (n=422)	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Age of the respondent (in completed years)	13	8
	14	83
	15	181
	16	122
	17	19
	18	7
	19	1
	20	1
Sex	Male	199
	Female	223
Grade	9	160
	10	262
Ethnicity	Brahmin/ Chhetri	102
	Janajati	248
	Dalit	49
	Others	23
Religion	Hindu	333
	Muslim	11
	Christian	27
	Buddhist	50
	Others	1
Mother's education level	Illiterate	44
	Primary	147
	Secondary	175
	Higher Secondary and above	56
Father's education level	Illiterate	13
	Primary	105
	Secondary	217
	Higher Secondary and above	87

Majority of the students i.e., 42.9% are 15 years old, 52.8% are females, 62.1% students are from class 10, 58.8% are Janajati, 78.9% are Hindu, 41.5% of students mother's education level is secondary, and 51.4% of students father's education level is secondary.

## English teaching learning methods

**Table 2: English teaching learning methods in schools**


Methods (n=422)	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I speak in English language at my school.	27	6.4	71	16.8	263	62.3	51	12.1	10	2.4
I speak in English at my home.	0	0	16	3.8	156	37	153	36.3	97	23
Lecture	164	38.9	77	18.2	143	33.9	29	6.9	9	2.1
Group discussion	73	17.3	96	22.7	197	46.7	55	13	1	0.2
Group work	65	15.4	32	7.6	218	51.7	91	21.6	16	3.8
Project work	19	4.5	31	7.3	196	46.4	115	27.3	61	14.5
Role-play	22	5.2	29	6.9	161	38.2	113	26.8	97	23

Majority of the students i.e., 62.3% sometimes speak in English language at their school, 37% of the students sometimes speak in English at their home, 38.9% said they are always taught English by lecture method, sometimes use group discussion (46.7%), sometimes use group work (51.7%), sometimes have project work (46.4%) and sometimes have role-play (38.2%).

## Perception of students on teaching and learning English

**Table 3: Perception of students on teaching and learning English**

Statement (n=422)	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I feel English is an easy subject.	93	22	244	57.8	71	16.8	8	1.9	6	1.4
I know about grammatical rules.	27	6.4	203	48.1	168	39.8	21	5	3	0.7
I can apply grammatical rules to make a sentence.	72	17.1	225	53.3	95	22.5	26	6.2	4	0.9
I can translate sentences between English and Nepali language.	90	21.3	218	51.7	88	20.9	16	3.8	10	2.4
I can read the paragraph when teacher asks me to read them.	225	53.3	156	37	29	6.9	11	2.6	1	0.2
I am satisfied with the marks I score in English.	139	32.9	184	43.6	76	18	19	4.5	4	0.9
My teacher often takes spelling tests.	62	14.7	119	28.2	121	28.7	106	25.1	14	3.3
My teacher provides the topic and asks to talk about it with my friends.	84	19.9	235	55.7	67	15.9	24	5.7	12	2.8
My teacher indirectly corrects my grammar without interruption.	116	27.5	190	45	70	16.6	34	8.1	12	2.8
My teacher uses audio tapes for listening task in class.	58	13.7	92	21.8	103	24.4	112	26.5	57	13.5
My teacher asks question after the student finishes listening to the audio tape.	69	16.4	143	33.9	66	15.6	103	24.4	41	9.7
My teacher uses different audio-visual objects to explain the meaning of word.	43	10.2	119	28.2	63	14.9	132	31.3	65	15.4
My teacher does not interact with students while teaching.	38	9	40	9.5	37	8.8	162	38.4	145	34.4
My teacher provides us project work in group.	73	17.3	171	40.5	88	20.9	55	13	35	8.3
My teacher asks us to read the script and perform role-play.	67	15.9	106	25.1	121	28.7	75	17.8	53	12.6

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The majority of the students i.e., 57.8% agree that they feel English is an easy subject, 48.1% agree that they know about grammatical rules, 53.3% agree that they can apply grammatical rules to make a sentence, 51.7% agree that they can translate sentences between English and Nepali language. Likewise, 53.3% strongly agree that they can read the paragraph when teacher asks me to read, 43.6% agree that they are satisfied with the marks scored in English, 28.7% gave neutral answer that their teacher often takes spelling tests, 45% agree that teacher indirectly corrects their grammar without interruption, and 33.9% agree that teacher asks question after the student finishes listening to the audio tape. Also, 31.3% disagree that teacher uses different audio-visual objects to explain the meaning of word, 38.4% disagree that teacher does not interact with students while teaching, and 28.7% are neutral about teacher asks them to read the script and perform role-play.

**Table 4: Educational technique adopted to teach English subject in selected public schools**

Methods (n=211)	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Lecture	72	34.1	20	9.5	88	41.7	28	13.3	3	1.4
Group discussion	33	15.6	31	14.7	125	59.2	22	10.4	0	0
Group work	55	26.1	11	5.2	96	45.5	46	21.8	3	1.4
Project work	13	6.2	13	6.2	65	30.8	77	36.5	43	20.4
Role-play	6	2.8	6	2.8	87	41.2	60	28.4	52	24.6

The majority of the students i.e., 41.7% in public school said that they are sometimes taught by lecture method, 59.2% said they sometimes use group discussion, 45.5% said they sometimes use group work, 36.5% said they rarely have project work and 41.2% said they sometimes have role-play.

**Table 5: Educational technique adopted to teach English subject in selected private schools**

Methods (n=211)	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Lecture	92	43.4	58	27.4	55	25.9	1	0.5	6	2.8
Group discussion	40	18.9	66	31.1	72	34	33	15.6	1	0.5
Group work	10	4.7	21	9.9	123	58	45	21.2	13	6.1
Project work	6	2.8	18	8.5	132	62.3	38	17.9	18	8.5
Role-play	16	7.5	23	10.8	75	35.4	53	25	45	21.2

The majority of the students i.e., 43.4% in private school said that they are always taught by lecture method, 34% said they sometimes use group discussion, 58% said they sometimes use group work, 62.3% said they sometimes have project work and 35.4% said they sometimes have role-play.

## Discussion

The findings revealed that despite the various techniques of education, both private and public school follows the traditional method to educate their students, i.e., lectures. Public schools tend to rely more on lecture-based teaching (41.7%), while private schools emphasize group work (58%) and project work (62.3%). Other studies also showed the similar findings follows the traditional method to educate their students, i.e., lectures (11–13) and assigning homework to the students (6) which does not enhance the creativity of the student (14). A practical approach helps to develop the understanding of the scientific concept as compared to the traditional method (15). Even educators lack the skills necessary to use the new technology, and as a result, only some school teachers use audio-visual aids in class to teach English (16). English teaching teacher's needs to use different activities which engage the students such as role-play, pair work, group work, and communication games using movies, songs, etc. (17) to meet the diverse needs and interests of their students (18,19). Studies has shown that the technology had the potential to alleviate learning difficulties in environments with limited resources and enhance learning outcomes (20–22).

The public schools students do not use English language to communicate in classroom whereas it is used by student in all of the private schools. The students and teachers of private schools are encouraged to speak in English while Public school uses the Nepali language (23,24). Most of the students perceive English as an easy subject; they know about grammatical rules, and they disagree that the teacher uses audio tapes for listening tasks in class and uses different audio-visual objects to explain the meaning of words. The students use Instagram as a social media app for learning English at home (25–29). Reading comprehension is relatively strong (53.3%), and many students are satisfied with their English marks (43.6%). However, there are areas for improvement, such as spelling tests, interactive teaching methods, and using audio-visual objects for vocabulary learning. Teaching English as a language for communication should take precedence over teaching a rigid set of grammar rules (30). Teachers should plan learning classes that use social media as a learning platform (31–33) because the use of social media, they have created a strong relationship to help each other and regulate their online teaching and learning (34,35).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the demographic characteristics, English language learning experiences, and teaching methods among students. The findings indicate a diverse student population in terms of age, gender, grade level, ethnicity, and parental education. The students' proficiency in English and their perception of the subject

vary, with a majority considering it an easy subject and having a basic understanding of grammatical rules and sentence construction. However, there are areas where improvement is needed, such as spelling tests and interactive teaching methods. The study also highlights the differences in teaching approaches between public and private schools, with lecture-based teaching more prevalent in public schools and a greater emphasis on group work and project work in private schools. These findings have implications for educators and policymakers in designing effective English language learning programs and improving teaching methods to enhance students' language skills and overall learning experience. The study suggests the need for a comprehensive approach that combines effective teaching methods, opportunities for interactive learning, and continuous assessment to foster students' language proficiency and confidence in English.

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