Analysis of Secondary Level Internal and External Assessment in Mathematics and English in the Schools of Khotang District

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the relationship between internal and external assessment in Mathematics and English subjects based on grades for students appearing in the Secondary Education Examination (SEE) in Diktel Rupakot Majhuwagadhi Municipality (DRMM), Khotang District, Koshi Province, Nepal. The study employed a quantitative research design. Using Cluster random sampling technique among seven schools out of 24 secondary schools of DRMM, .The data have been processed and analyzed using SPSS 16 software. The study found that A larger number of A+ and A grades is noticed in internal/practical assessment, but other grades, B+, B, C+, C, D and NG, are more visible in external assessment of Mathematics and English subjects for SEE. It shows of grade inflation in internal and external assessment. The average GPA of internal assessment is higher than the external assessment in Mathematics and English subjects. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at $p < 0.05$, using Pearson-Product product-moment correlation Coefficient. It is found that there is a low degree of positive correlation between internal assessments and external assessments of class 10 Compulsory Mathematics and English subjects for SEE in Khotang district, Nepal. Represented samples were selected so the results cab be generalized through out the municipality. Regular workshops should be organized for the teacher of secondary level school to conduct internal assessment supervision mechanisms, to form to maintain predictive validity of the assessment.

Keywords:

internal assessment, external assessment, mathematics, English, SEE

Introduction

Assessment is a general term that includes full range of procedures used to gain information about learning. Acharya (2019) writes that assessment judges the students' learning purpose when they know what they are supposed to learn.

The evaluation system began along with the start of education in Nepal. Under the Gurukul system, learners used evaluation based on formal and summative examinations. The National Education System Plan introduced the internal evaluation system for the first

time in Nepal, which emphasizes the teaching learning process with the evaluation system (Ministry of Education, 1970). With the invention and development of technologies and changes in teaching methods, the evaluation system has undergone several changes. The National Curriculum Framework emphasized both formative and summative assessments in an equal manner, considering both formal and informal assessment of 50% formative and 50% summative assessments at the basic level, and it is 25% formative and 75% summative assessments at the secondary level (Curriculum Development Centre, 2020).

Curriculum development center (2078) of Secondary Education has published student assessment of Mathematics subject in two ways: first, formative as internal, and second, summative as external. Different aspects of the 25% internal assessment area are class participation 3 marks, terminal evaluation 6 marks and practical or project work 16 marks. 25% internal assessments are conducted by the subject teacher in school, and 75% external assessment is conducted externally.

Teaching has three stages: pre-teaching stage, interactive stage and post-teaching stage. In the pre-stage teacher make a plan line annual plan, unit plan and lesson plan and collect or prepare instructional material and searched referenced materials. In interactive stage teacher teach in the class doing different activities in the classroom and tried to fulfil specific objectives. In the post-teaching stage, students' performance is evaluated. Student can be evaluated using different tools like testing and non-testing tools. There are formative, diagnostic and summative evaluation . Continuous assessment / formative evaluation of students can foster a learning attitude and performance.

Table 1 and 2 show that 49 (14.1 %) students got NG in the Mathematics subject, 27 (7.8%) students got NG in the English subject, and 14 (4%) students got NG in the Nepali subject in DRMM in academic session 2081. This shows that among these three subjects comparatively Mathematics and English are comparatively more difficult subjects. So, Mathematics and English were selected in this study.

Formative assessment in English subject is taken as internal assessment which covers different tasks such as observation of students', portfolio, Games linguistic behaviour, tests (class, weekly, debates, anecdotal record monthly), story telling/retelling, work sample/written, project works, dramatization/simulation samples, creative works, role play, interviews, class work, group discussion, home assignments, reflective practice, journal writing etc. and summative assessment is taken as external assessment that includes final written examination which covers only reading and writing skills with grammar.

Sapkota (2022) has mentioned that both formative and summative assessments are equally important for the enhancement of the pupils' learning. Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) (2021) mentions both formative and summative assessments to assess the students' knowledge and language skills. There is the provision of 25% formative assessment that includes classroom participation 3 marks, unit tests 6 marks, listening 8 marks and speaking 8 marks, and summative assessment is written examinations that covers the remaining 75% which includes reading, writing, and grammar. Certificate of competences is provided according to summative assessment and rank of the student is declared by summative assessment. The overall students' understanding of the standards (competencies and learning outcomes) of the curriculum is assessed and graded through

summative assessment. Curriculum Development Centre (2021) has mentioned both internal and external assessment procedures. Both of these provisions of internal and external assessments are considered for the all-round development of the students.

Tables 1 and 2 show that 49 (14.1 %) students got NG in the Mathematics subject, 27 (7.8%) students got NG in the English subject, and 14 (4%) students got NG in the Nepali subject in DRMM in academic session 2081. This shows that among these three subjects comparatively Mathematics and English are comparatively more difficult subjects. More student got NG in Mathematics and English subject in external assessment this study tried to find relation between internal assessment and external assessment.

Literature Review

Internal Assessment and External Assessment Practice in SEE in Nepal Schools

Internal Assessment: This component, constituting 25 marks out of the total 100 for the Mathematics and English subjects, is based on the school's subject teacher and conducted throughout the academic year. Introduced in its current form in 2023 by Nepal's Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), it emphasizes practical, hands-on evaluations such as project work, lab activities, and continuous classroom assessments. The goal is to shift from rote memorization to application-based learning, allowing teachers to provide feedback on time and identify strengths in problem-solving and conceptual understanding in Mathematics and listening, speaking, reading and writing in the English subject.

External Assessment: Worth 75 marks, this is a standardized, summative written examination administered province level or nationally by the National Examination Board (NEB) in grade ten (SEE). It tests theoretical knowledge, computational accuracy, and analytical skills in mathematics and reading and writing skill in English under timed conditions.

Alternative assessment: Alternative assessment tools can be used for differently able students.

Internal assessments, often continuous and classroom-based, aim to foster ongoing learning and skill development and external assessments, especially standardized examinations, provide certification and accountability purposes.

Table 1

	Frequency	%	Valid %	C.F. %
A+	41	11.8	11.8	11.8
A	43	12.4	12.4	24.1
B+	39	11.2	11.2	35.3
B	59	17.0	17.0	52.3
C+	66	19.0	19.0	71.3
C	33	9.5	9.5	80.7
D	18	5.2	5.2	85.9
NG	49	14.1	14.1	100.0
Total	348	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey data analyzed by SPSS 16.0

Table 2

	Frequency	%	Valid %	C.F. %
A+	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
A	125	35.9	35.9	37.1
B+	50	14.4	14.4	51.4
3.6	1	.3	.3	51.7
B	49	14.1	14.1	65.8
C+	41	11.8	11.8	77.6
C	35	10.1	10.1	87.6
D	16	4.6	4.6	92.2
NG	27	7.8	7.8	100.0
Total	348	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey data analyzed by SPSS 16.0

Tables 1 and 2 show that 49 (14.1 %) students got NG in the Mathematics subject, 27 (7.8%) students got NG in the English subject, and 14 (4%) students got NG in the Nepali subject in DRMM in academic session 2081. This shows that among these three subjects comparatively Mathematics and English are comparatively more difficult subjects.

The performance of a student can be judged in different ways: formative, summative and diagnostic tests. Recently, the time students of grade 10 are measured by internal and external assessments. Different researchers have published articles showing a relation between internal/practical and external/theoretical assessment. Abe et al. (2014) found the relationship between internal and external assessment scores is significant in mathematics, English and science subjects among secondary school students in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Metlí et al., (2023) found that external assessment scores can be predicted in less amount by internal assessment scores, with correlations ranging from weak to moderate depending on the subject. Amadu et al. (2021) explored the relationship between performance of senior secondary school students in internal tests (school/teacher-generated) and external assessments conducted by the West Africa Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) in Ghana and found a positive relationship between internal and external math assessment scores.

Bhattarai (2008) researched on the topic "predictive validity of internal assessment". He did analysis of two sets scores within each depart and uniformity in predictive validity did not exist and concluded that English education predictive validity is low with correlation coefficient + 0.28,Mathematics education predictive validity is high with correlation coefficient + 0.54, Nepali Language education predictive validity is high with correlation coefficient + 0.59, Health and Physical education predictive validity is low negative with correlation coefficient -0.47, Education planning and management predictive validity is very low negative with correlation coefficient -0.2, and Economics education predictive validity is very high with correlation coefficient + 0.95.

Chapagain (2020) did research on the topic "School Student Academic Performance in Nepal: An Analysis Using the School Education Exam (SEE) Results" and found that there is a significant gap in student performance between theory and practical subjects. Malsawmtluanga and Hlondo (2025) researched the topic "Analysis of the Achievement of Secondary School Students of Mizoram in Science Theory and Practical" and found a moderately positive correlation between secondary students' science theory and practical marks in Mizoram.

Tamang (2025) has found that teachers depend mostly on class tests, terminal, and final exams to evaluate the students' learning achievement. Various tools of formative assessment like assignments, project work and report, presentations, classroom participation etc. less priority and carried out traditionally.

Oli (2025) researched the topic "Internal and External Assessment Analysis of Math, English and Local Curriculum" and discovered that a high proportion of A+ and A grades is seen in internal assessment, while C and D grades are more visible in external assessment.

However, the relationship between academic performance in internal/practical and external/theoretical components is changeable based on subjects and places. So, this study tries to address this gap by examining whether strong performance in internal/practical assessments predicts success in external/theoretical examinations, or if discrepancies exist that require pedagogical adjustments and refreshment training for teachers to maintain predictive validity.

Research objectives and hypothesis

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To compare the mean GPA of internal and external assessments of the Mathematics subject.
2. To compare the mean GPA of internal and external assessments of the English subject.
3. To find out the correlation between the internal and external assessment of the Mathematics subject.
4. To find out the correlation between internal and external assessment of the English subject.

A hypothesis is a guess, an assumption, or a quantitative statement on the population parameter (Gupta, 2011). The null hypothesis, as used in quantitative research, states that there is no significant difference between the parameter and the statistic, i.e., there is no significant difference between a population parameter and a sample statistic (Charan et al., 2021; Rao, 2012). Furthermore, a substantial difference is indicated by an alternative hypothesis (H1), which is the opposite of the null hypothesis (Das et al., 2016). It is also known as the difference hypothesis for this reason. The following hypothesis is evaluated in the study at the significance level of 0.05.

H1: 1.There is a significant relation between internal and external assessment in the Mathematics subject.

H1: 2.There significant relation between internal and external assessment in the English subject.

Delimitation of the study

This study uses an internal assessment of Mathematics and English subjects. Internal assessment grade is taken from secondary sources, but how the subject teacher has assessed internally is not observed. The teacher provided marks for all the assessment areas of the internal assessment is not retested. This study was done at only 7 schools of the DRMM of Khotang. This study is not concerned with alternative assessment.

Research Methods

In the study, quantitative research design is used. Students of grade ten studying in all 21 community schools (CS) and three institutional schools (IS) currently running in DRMM are population of the study, who took the final examination in the academic session 2081. Khotang district has ten local government units, two of them are municipalities, and eight are rural municipalities / Gaupalika. According to office of the Executive of DRMM, there are 21 community schools and three are institutional schools and in total 24 secondary school are there in DRMM. The sample was selected through a cluster random sampling method. Cluster was community school (two schools from the city area, and three schools from urban area) and Institutional school (one school from cent percent passed school and one school from cent percent not passed) School 1. DRMM -1 and Panch Ma Vi DRMM - 1 are selected from city area schools, Sital Madhyamic Bidhyalaya Khalle DRMM 3, and Annapurna Ma. Vi. Buwalung and Janajagriti Madhyamic Bidhyalaya Solma Dandagau DRMM-2 are selected from a community school in an urban area, Diktel English Boarding School DRMM-1 is selected from an institutional school passing cent percent, and Hillside Academy DRMM-2 Alchhedunga is selected from an institutional school cent percent not passing cent percent. 832 students attended in SEE, among them 348 students passed in the academic year 2081. Sample is taken total students of selected schools .

Chhetri (as cited in Solvin, 1960) have mentioned a formula to find the sample size n = where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the margin of error (2075, p 67). In this study, N = 832, if e =2% then n= 194 and if e = 5% then n = 270. So, 348 samples are a sufficient number of samples for a sample survey.

Name of the students, their date of birth, sex, symbol number are collected through school administration and though telephone conversation with subject teacher and head teacher. 348 students' grade sheet are downloaded from National Examination Board and the data entered into SPSS 16.0. SPSS software is used to analyse the data and test the hypothesis. It is calculated the descriptive statistics such as average GPA, standard deviation and Inferential statistics Pearson coefficient of correlation.

Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) (2078) for implementation of the letter grading system companion manual has mentioned the methods for determining marks , Grade point, Achievement level in letter and explanation of achievement level in school-level curriculum as below.

Method of data analysis and its assessment criteria

Table 3

SN	Achievement percentage	Graded points	level of Achievement letters grade	achievement level explanation
1	90 and above	4.0	A+	Outstanding
2	80 and above, less than 90	3.6	A	Excellent
3	70 and above, less than 80	3.2	B+	Very good
4	60 and above less than 70	2.8	B	Good
5	50 and above less than 60	2.4	C+	Satisfactory
6	40 and above less than 50	2.0	C	Acceptable
7	35 and above less than 40	1.6	D	Basic
8	less than 35	-	Ng	Non Graded

Analysis of the data and interpretation

National Examination Board administered the Secondary Education Examination (SEE), in Nepal's secondary school system at the conclusion of class or grade 10. It is an improvement over the School Leaving Certificate (SLC), which was the previous name. Rai (2024) has posted the results of the DRMM of the SEE academic year 2081.

Table 4

Number of student from 24 school and their number in the SEE in 8 GPA groups

SN	Name of school	participated no. in SEE	GPA	GPA	GPA	GPA	GPA	GPA	GPA	GPA
SN	Name of school	participated no. in SEE	3.61-4	3.21-3.6	2.81-3.2	2.41-2.8	2.01-2.4	1.61-2	1.6	NG
1	School 1	177	12	50	91					24
2	School 2	37	12	14	10	1				
3	School 3	58	51	7						
4	School 4	35	17	18						
5	School 5	9			4	2	1			2
6	School 6	11		3	8					
7	School 7	8	2	6						
8	School 8	24		6	11	5				2
9	School 9	19		3	9	6				2
10	School 10	35	1	17	8		5	1		3
11	School 11	29		9	17	3				
12	School 12	34		1	10					23
13	School 13	27								26
14	School 14	14				1				13
15	School 15	18		11	4	2				1
16	School 16	53		2	3	10				38
17	School 17	40			3	24		3	1	9
18	School 18	45		17	15	5	1			7

19	School 19	25	4	7	9					5
20	School 20	24				8				16
21	School 21	61		5	13	23	3			17
22	School 22	13	1	2	8	2				
23	School 23	10	2	2	2	2				2
24	School 24	27		1	2	9				15
	Total	832	106	181	227	103	10	4	1	202

Source: School administration records

The Secondary Education Examination (SEE) is critical milestone in academic journey of students, particularly in mathematics and English subjects, which combines theoretical knowledge with practical applications and language skills. Recent educational reforms have emphasized practical assessments to enhance students' problem-solving skills.

The 2081 SEE results in Nepal showed a significant underperformance, with a pass rate of 47.86% and 52.14% of students receiving a "non-graded" status, requiring them to retake exams for subjects in which they scored poorly. A comparatively high percentage of students got NG in mathematics. 832 students participated in SEE from 24 secondary schools of DRMM in the academic session 2081. Among them, 632 students passed, and 202 students got non-graded (NG).

348 students' grade sheets are downloaded and entered into SPSS 16.0, these are analysed and interpreted by using SPSS software as below

Table 5

	Frequency	%	Valid %	C.F. %
A+	184	52.9	52.9	52.9
A	154	44.3	44.3	97.1
B+	7	2.0	2.0	99.1
B	1	.3	.3	99.4
C+	1	.3	.3	99.7
C	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	348	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey data analyzed by SPSS 16.0

Table 5 shows that in the internal assessment, 52.9% students got an A+ grade, 44.3 % students got an A grade, 2% students got a B+ grade, 0.3% students got a B grade,0.3% students got a C+ grade,0.3% students got a C grade, no student got a D grade and NG in the internal assessment. Most students have got grade A+ and grade A in the internal assessment.

Table 6

Grade-wise number of students and percentage of the Mathematics subject in the external assessment

		Frequency	%	Valid %	C.F. %
Valid	A+	41	11.8	11.8	11.8
	A	43	12.4	12.4	24.1
	B+	39	11.2	11.2	35.3
	B	59	17.0	17.0	52.3
	C+	66	19.0	19.0	71.3
	C	33	9.5	9.5	80.7
	D	18	5.2	5.2	85.9
	NG	49	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	348	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey data analysed by SPSS 16.

Table 6 shows that in the external assessment, 11.8% students got an A+ grade, 12.4 % students got an A grade, 11.2% students got a B+ grade, 17% students got a B grade,19% students got C+ grade,9.5% student got C grade, 5.2% student got D grade and 14.1% student got NG external assessment. The highest per cent of students got grade C+ and B then A, A+, B, NG and D in the external assessment of the mathematics subject.

Table 7

Grade wise number of students and percentage of English subject in the internal assessment

		Frequency	%	Valid %	C.F. %
Valid	A+	173	49.7	49.7	49.7
	A	156	44.8	44.8	94.5
	B+	11	3.2	3.2	97.7
	B	6	1.7	1.7	99.4
	C+	2	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	348	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey data analyzed by SPSS 16.0

Table 7 shows that 173 students or 49.7% student got A+ grade, 156 students or 44.8 % student got A grade, 11 students or 3.2% student got B+ grade, 6 students or 1.7% student got B grade,2 students or 6% student got C+ grade and no student got C grade, D grade and NG in internal assessment of English subject. Most of students have got an A+ grade and an A grade in the internal assessment in the English subject.

Table 8

Grade-wise number and percentage of students of the English subject in the external assessment

	Frequency	%	Valid %	C.F. %
A+	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
A	125	35.9	35.9	37.1
B+	50	14.4	14.4	51.4
B	49	14.1	14.1	65.8
C+	41	11.8	11.8	77.6
C	35	10.1	10.1	87.6
D	16	4.6	4.6	92.2
NG	27	7.8	7.8	100.0
Total	348	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey data analyzed by SPSS 16.0

Table 8 shows that 4 students or 1.1% student got A+ grade, 125 students or 35.9 % student got A grade, 50 student or 14.4% student got B+ grade, 49 students or 14.1% student got B grade,41 students or 11.8% student got C+ grade, 35 student or 10.1% student got C grade, 16 students or 4.6% student got D grade and 27 student or 7.8% student got NG in English subject in external assessment.

348 students' grade sheets are downloaded and entered into SPSS 16.0, these are analysed and interpreted by using SPSS software as below.

Table 9

Comparison of mean, maximum GPA, minimum GPA and Std. Deviation of English and Math subjects in SEE

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
English GPA in internal assessment	348	2.40	4.00	3.7764	.28206
English GPA in external assessment	348	.00	4.00	2.7460	.99940
Mathematics GPA in internal assessment	348	2.00	4.00	3.7977	.24763
Mathematics GPA in external assessment	348	.0	4.0	2.458	1.1959

Source: Field survey data analyzed by SPSS 16.0

Table 9 shows that the mean (3.7764) of internal assessment with the highest GPA 4 and lowest GPA 2.4 of the English subject is higher than the mean GPA (2.7460) of external assessment with the highest GPA 4 and lowest GPA 0, and the Standard deviation of internal assessment is 0.28206, and the Standard deviation of external assessment is 0.99940. Mean GPA (3.7977) of internal assessment with the highest GPA 4 and lowest

GPA 2 of Mathematics subject is higher than mean (2.458) of external assessment with the highest GPA 4 and lowest GPA 0, and the Standard deviation of internal assessment is 0.24763, and the Standard deviation of external assessment is 1.1959.

The correlation between internal and external assessment of the Mathematics subject and the English subject is analysed by using Pearson product-moment correlation in SPSS.

Table 10

Correlations between internal and external assessment of the mathematics subject

		Mathematics GPA in internal assessment	Mathematics GPA in external assessment
Mathematics GPA in external assessment	Pearson Correlation	1	.311**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	348	348
Mathematics GPA in external assessment	Pearson Correlation	.311**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	348	348

Table 10 shows that the correlation coefficient between internal and external assessment of class 10 Mathematics subject in SEE is 0.311. The relationship between these two variables is significant at 5% level of significance, as p=.000 is less than the level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a low degree of positive correlation between internal assessment and external assessment of the class 10 Mathematics subject in SEE.

Table 11

Correlations between internal and external assessment of English subject

		English GPA in internal assessment	English GPA in external assessment
English GPA in internal assessment	Pearson Correlation	1	.272**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	348	348
English GPA in external assessment	Pearson Correlation	.272**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	348	348

Table 11 shows that the correlation coefficient between internal and external assessment of class 10 compulsory English subject is 0.272. The relationship between these two variables is significant at 5% level of significance, as p=.000 is less than the level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a low degree of positive

correlation between internal assessment and external assessment of the Class 10 Compulsory English subject.

Conclusion

This study found students' academic achievement in two compulsory English subject and Mathematics subject, based on internal and external assessment in SEE. Most of student got A+ grade and A grade and very few student got B+ grade, B grade and C+ grade and no student got C grade, D grade and NG in internal assessment of Mathematics subject but approximately equal number of student got A+, A, B+, B and C+ grade and more student got C, D and NG grade in external assessment. Most of student got A+ grade and A grade and very few student got B+ grade, B grade and C+ grade and no student got C grade, D grade and NG in internal assessment of English subject whereas few student got A+ grade, approximately equal number of student got A, B+, B and C+and C grade and some student got C, D and NG grade also in external assessment.. It is also found that the average GPA (3.7997) of internal assessment of Mathematics is higher than the average GPA (2.458) of external assessment of Mathematics, and the average GPA (3.7764) of internal assessment of English Subject is higher than the average GPA (2.7460) of external assessment. There is a low degree of positive correlation (0.311) between internal assessment and external assessment of the class 10 Compulsory Mathematics subject. There is a low degree of positive correlation (0.211) between internal assessment and external assessment of the Class 10 Compulsory English subject.

It concluded that there is grade inflation between internal and external assessments. Internal assessments approaches to show higher grades but external assessments showed lower grades. These differences raise concerns about the reliability and consistency of internal and external assessment practices in secondary schools level. It is necessary to revisit the recent assessment system to ensure fairness and accuracy in student achievement evaluation, and workshop or refreshment training for teachers should be provided in the internal assessment.

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