Overview of Student Learning Assessment: The Case of Nepal

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National policies or programmes to assess student learning

Public examinations
• Primary level: Resource Centre (RC) (sub-district) level grade 3 and grade 5 examination at the last of the academic year (April)
• Lower Secondary Level: District Level Examination at the end of grade 8
• Secondary level: National level examination is conducted at the end of grade 10, called School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination
• Higher Secondary: National level examinations at the end of grade 11 and 12

Other types of national assessments
• the government has approved the following road map for National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) for Grade 3, 5 and 8

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Until now the road-map is being implemented successfully
National policies or programmes to assess student learning

School-based assessment (teacher based as subject teacher set test items)

- For grade 1 to 5 Continuous Assessment System (CAS)
- Unit test, trimester test for all grades except CAS implemented grades
- Annual examinations at end of academic year for each grades

Participation in international assessments (e.g. PISA, TIMSS)

- Nepalese NASA has no direct bearing in the international studies, however it gives some international flavor. About 15% items were borrowed from PISA Reading and Science banks and from TIMSS mathematics bank.
- Items were pretested (contextualized), items used without any amendment.
- IRT Was used for calibration, comparing and equating the data.
International Comparison

Nepali
(PISA Reading scale, 0 = international mean)

Latent ability (Theta)

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<tr>
<th>Content areas</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
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<td>-0.97</td>
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International Comparison

Mathematics
(TIMSS scale, 0 = international mean)

Latent ability (theta)

Knowledge  Comprehension  Application  Higher Ability

Hierarchical level

0.96  0.3  0.13  -0.22
International Comparison

Social Studies
(PISA Science scale, 0=international mean)

Latent Ability (Theta)

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Challenges

• Administrative
  – To maintain test quality: Item bank and its secrecy, exam administration and culture of examination
  – Continuity and technical expertise

• Political will and Awareness regarding National assessment

• To impalement the findings (the policy level issues) for example student achieved lower marked who were taught by 48 years above age teachers)
Lessons learned

• Increase the achievement level (as average student achievement is below 50%)
• Enhance the low performing schools, etc. (remarkable variations observed among schools, districts and development regions)
• Increase public school performance (Public 44%, private 63%)
• Address on activity and project work based learning (performed poorly in higher order cognitive skills)
• Address the social challenges (as performance is directly related with SES and ethnicity and home language)