

The Educational and Social Impacts of the School Leaving English Test in Nepal

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Introduction

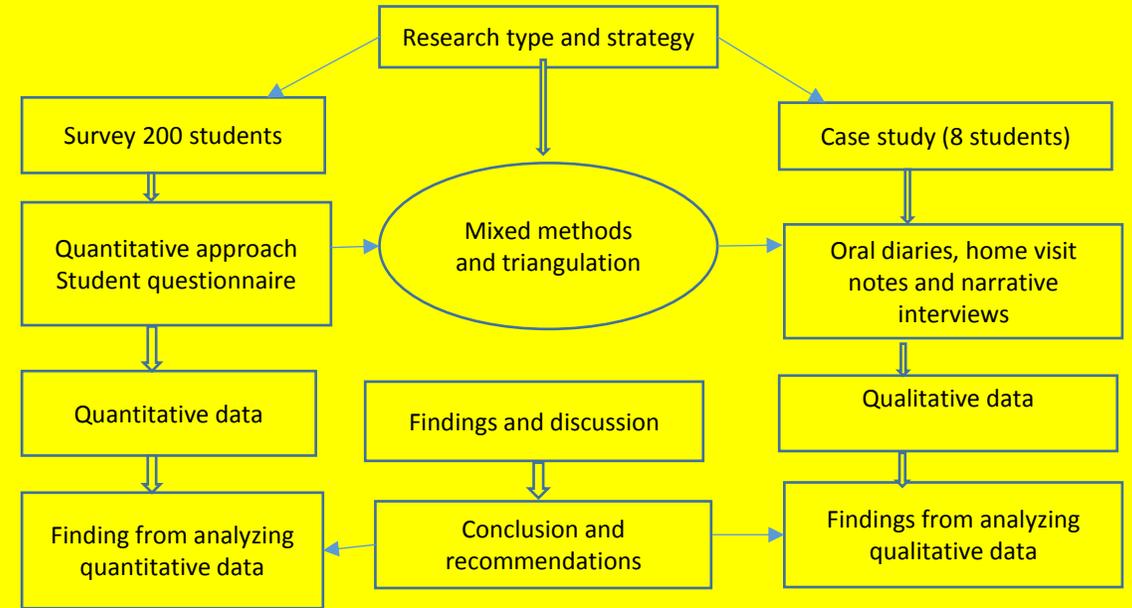
High-stakes tests are powerful devices as they are capable of dictating many educational and social decisions and affect the society at large (Shohamy, 1998). The school leaving English test (a high-stakes test) in Nepal also serves several functions such as a measure of students' language skills, a gateway to higher education, a measure of quality education and a basic license for official employment. However, very little is known about the impacts of the test.

Research questions

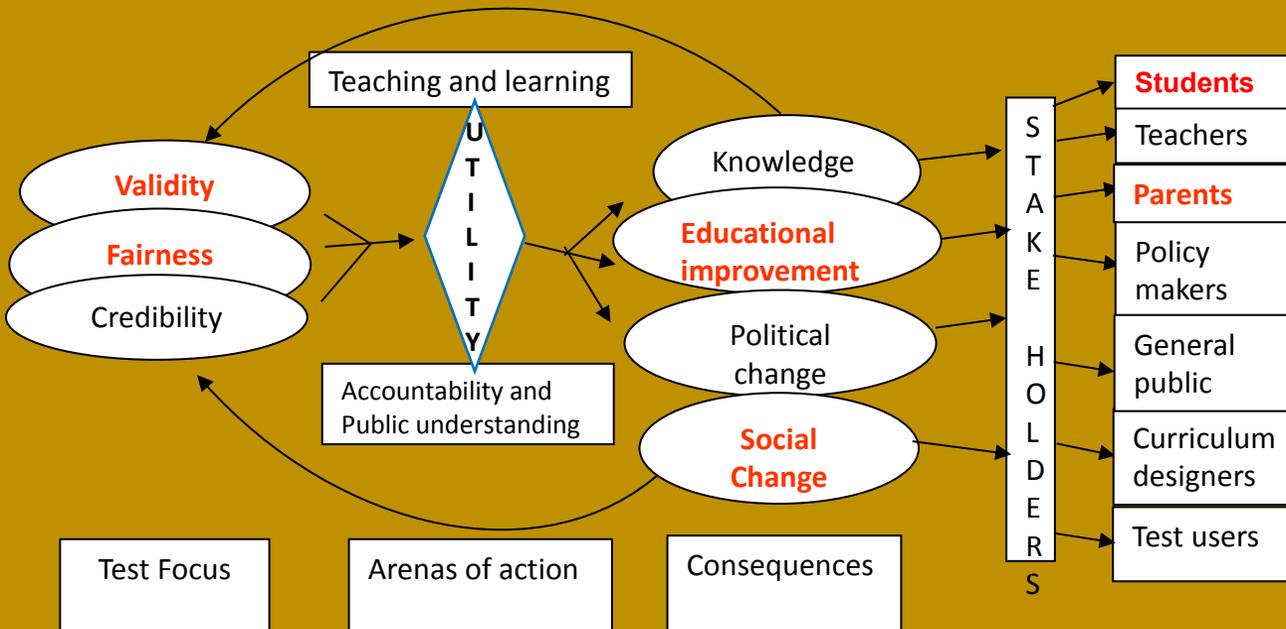
Overarching question- What are the educational and social impacts of the English test in the Nepalese context?

- 1) How do students and parents perceive the test?
- 2) What is the nature and scope of the pre- and post-test impacts on students in terms of motivation towards learning English, test preparation and career development?
- 3) What type of home context is created to provide test-related support to the students?

Research methodology



Theoretical framework



(adapted from Gipps, 1999)

Pilot study results

- students hold different perceptions about the test quality and its utility
- test impacts (positive) on learning English and test pressure on students from different sectors
- parents' enormous support to their children irrespective of their education background

Implications

This study will illuminate the consequences of the test on its stakeholders and provide guidelines for the improvement of the test along with a new theoretical framework for exploring the nature of test impacts.

References

- Gipps, C. (1999). Socio-Cultural Aspects of Assessment. *Review of Research in Education*, 24(1), pp.355–392.
- Shohamy, E. (1998). Critical language testing and beyond. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 24(4) pp.331–345.

