



ISSN 0975 - 6795

Research J. Humanities and Social Sciences. 4(1): January-March, 2013, 69-75

Research Article



www.anvpublication.org

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Relevance of Internal Assessment in Bachelor of Education Programme

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ABSTRACT:

The study aimed at identifying and studying Extreme Cases with respect to the award of internal assessment scores by different teacher-training institutions affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 in selected eight courses of Bachelor of Education Programme. The sample for the study included all the candidates who passed their B.Ed. examination during the academic sessions 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10. The results indicated that there is an excessive tendency towards over-marking in internal assessment and also that the internal assessment scores mostly fall towards the higher end of the scale in Bachelor of Education Programme run by Himachal Pradesh University. The over marking may be ascribed to the facts that (i) the prescribed internal assessment policy is vague, (ii) there is absence of moderation policy either at institutional or university level, and (iii) the teachers or institutions are not accountable for under or over marking.

KEY WORDS: Extreme Case, Bachelor of Education Programme, Himachal Pradesh University, Internal Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION:

In order to overcome the evils of one-time examination, the introduction of internal assessment system has been advocated and recommended by various Commissions, Committees and Reports at all levels of education (e.g. The Report of the University Education Commission, December 1948–August 1949; Report of the Secondary Education Commission, October 1952 to June 1953; Education and National Development: Report of the Education Commission, Volume I: General Problems; Volume II: School Education; Volume III: Higher Education, 1964-66; National Policy on Education, 1968; National Policy on Education 1986: Programme of Action 1992, 1992; Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education, 1998; Higher Education in India: Issues, Concerns and New Directions, December 2003; Report of the CABE Committee on Universalisation of Secondary Education, 2005; National Curriculum Framework, 2005; Position Paper: National Focus Group on Examination Reforms, 2006; National Knowledge Commission: Report to the Nation, 2006-2009, March 2009; Action Plan for Academic and Administrative Reforms, 2009; Inclusive and Qualitative Expansion of Higher Education 12th Five-Year Plan, 2012-17, November 2011).

Received on 03.06.2012

Modified on 12.07.2012

Accepted on 10.09.2012

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Till recently, the component of internal assessment existed at school stage and in a limited fashion at higher education stage where it mostly prevailed in professional courses. However, there have been unfavourable reports with respect to the implementation of the concept of internal assessment.

For example, researchers have reported that internal assessment scores excel the external assessment scores, internal assessment scores are independent of external assessment scores and that there is wide disparity between the marks in theory and practical examinations (Kamat, 1972; Raina, 1972; Gunasekaran and Jayanthi, 1980; Rasool, Sarup and Sharma, 1981; Dabir, 1984; Bolashetty, 2002; Singh, 2010; and Rajendran, Mary, Christy and Mary, 2012). It has also been found that there is a tendency towards over-marking in internal assessment, the internal assessment scores mostly fall in the higher end of the scale, there are instances of students in private colleges scoring as high as 90 to 99 per cent marks in the internal assessment and students score excellent marks in the internal assessment whereas their performance in the University Examination is relatively poor (Venkubai, 1965; Nath, 1980; Dabir, 1984; Rajendran, Mary, Christy and Mary, 2012).

Following UGC’s letter dated March 2009 regarding implementation of its Action Plan for Academic and Administrative Reforms at higher education level; nearly all the colleges and universities in India have introduced these reforms, mostly partially. But at least, one of the reforms i.e. ‘continuous internal evaluation’ has been implemented by majority of the higher education institutions in one form or the other.

The component of internal assessment was introduced in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Programme being run by Himachal Pradesh University initially in the year 2007. Later, in 2009, it was slightly modified in view of UGC guidelines. In view of earlier findings, the authors of this paper intended to answer the research question – What is the extent of over marking in internal assessment in case of B.Ed. programme of Himachal Pradesh University? The answer to this question may help in determining the relevance of internal assessment component at higher education stage, with special reference to Bachelor of Education programme.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

To identify and study Extreme Cases with respect to the award of internal assessment marks by different teacher-training institutions affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University during the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 in selected eight courses of Bachelor of Education Programme.

3. SAMPLE:

The sample for the study included all the candidates who were enrolled in Bachelor of Education Programme in different teacher-training institutions affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University and passed their B.Ed. examination during the sessions 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10. The details of the candidates taken for the study are given as under:

Year/ Session	Number of institutions affiliated to H.P. University	Total number of candidates appeared in examination	Comparison and failure cases	Number of candidates finally included in the sample
2007-2008	67	6700	176	6524
2008-2009	70	6537	97	6440
2009-2010	73	7826	230	7596

It may be pointed out that barring two, all the teacher-training institutions were being managed privately.

4. SELECTION OF COURSES:

According to the curriculum prescribed for B.Ed. programme run by Himachal Pradesh University every student has to pass the following courses:

1. Six compulsory course viz., Education in Emerging Indian Society, Development of Learner and Teaching-Learning Process, Development of Educational System in India, Essentials of Educational Technology, Education for Values, Environment and Human Rights and School Management
2. Any two of the teaching methodology course viz., Teaching of -- Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Social Sciences, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Home Science and Commerce.
3. Work Education and Work Experience (Theory)
4. Work Education and Work Experience (Practicum – Grade is to be awarded after internal evaluation)
5. Skill in Teaching (Two Subjects per Student – to be evaluated by external examiner)

In the present investigation, only eight courses – six compulsory and two teaching subjects – which had both theory as well as internal assessment component were taken for study. All the teaching-subjects were treated at par and were considered as two subjects for the total sample.

5. DATA COLLECTION:

The scores of the students in internal assessment for each of the eight courses were noted down from university records. It may be noted that internal assessment score fixed for each course was 20.

6. ANALYSIS OF DATA:

The objective of the research was to identify and study Extreme Cases with respect to the award of internal assessment marks by different teacher-training institutions affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University separately for the sessions 2008, 2009 and 2010 in selected eight courses of Bachelor of Education Programme.

Certain terms used in this part are operationally defined as under:

Bachelor of Education Programme:

Bachelor of Education Programme (B.Ed.) is a one year training programme for preparing teachers for secondary education.

Case:

The internal assessment marks awarded by a college in all the eight courses in one academic session was treated as a 'Case'.

Table 1: Extreme cases in terms of institutions awarding 17 to 20 marks in internal assessment in all the eight courses to all the successful candidates during any of the year i.e. 2008, 2009 or 2010

College/ Case	Year	Successful Candidates	No. of Courses	Number and Percentage of students awarded internal assessment marks in eight courses			
				17	18	19	20
1	2010	63	8	-----	-----	51 (10.10%)	453 (89.90%)
2	2008	83	8	-----	580 (87.30%)	84 (12.70%)	-----
3	2008	89	8	-----	137 (19.20%)	421 59.10%)	154 (21.70%)
4	2008	91	8	-----	28 (3.80%)	307 (42.20%)	393 (54.00%)
5	2009	58	8	-----	20 (4.30%)	188 (40.50%)	256 (55.20%)
6	2009	85	8	-----	71 (10.40%)	354 (52.10%)	255 (37.50%)
7	2009	87	8	-----	119 (17.10%)	216 (31.00%)	361 (51.90%)
8	2010	87	8	-----	75 (10.70%)	606 (87.10%)	15 (2.20%)
9	2010	87	8	-----	218 (31.30%)	408 (58.60%)	70 (10.10%)
10	2010	78	8	-----	129 (20.70%)	321 (51.40%)	174 (27.90%)
11	2008	59	8	8 (1.70%)	159 (33.70%)	305 (64.60%)	-----
12	2009	85	8	76 (11.20%)	330 (48.50%)	274 (40.30%)	-----
13	2008	88	8	28 (4.00%)	556 (79.00%)	120 (17.00%)	-----
14	2008	60	8	150 (31.30%)	209 (43.50%)	121 (25.20%)	-----
15	2009	80	8	125 (19.50%)	336 (52.50%)	179 (28.00%)	-----
16	2009	62	8	49 (9.90%)	298 (60.10%)	149 (30.00%)	-----
17	2009	86	8	3 (0.40%)	196 (28.50%)	489 (71.10%)	-----
18	2008	85	8	3 (0.40%)	416 (61.20%)	261 (38.40%)	-----
19	2009	82	8	138 (21.00%)	359 (54.80%)	159 (24.20%)	-----
20	2010	83	8	18 (2.70%)	398 (59.90%)	248 (37.40%)	-----
21	2010	179	8	37 (2.60%)	662 (46.20%)	733 (51.20%)	-----
22	2010	94	8	70 (9.30%)	188 (25.00%)	494 (65.70%)	-----
23	2010	58	8	119 (25.60%)	211 (45.50%)	134 (28.90%)	-----
24	2010	100	8	249 (31.10%)	275 (34.40%)	276 (34.50%)	-----
25	2010	63	8	20 (4.00%)	92 (18.30%)	392 (77.70%)	-----
26	2010	98	8	4 (0.50%)	387 (49.40%)	393 (50.10%)	-----
27	2010	80	8	91 (14.20%)	284 (44.40%)	265 (41.40%)	-----
28	2010	84	8	40 (6.00%)	404 (60.10%)	228 (33.90%)	-----
29	2008	164	8	343 (26.10%)	518 (39.50%)	451 (34.40%)	-----
30	2008	88	8	9 (1.28%)	240 (34.09%)	308 (43.75%)	147 (20.88%)
31	2009	63	8	48 (9.50%)	195 (38.70%)	233 (46.20%)	28 (5.60%)
32	2009	72	8	44 (7.60%)	198 (34.40%)	309 (53.70%)	25 (4.30%)
33	2009	86	8	40 (5.80%)	398 (57.80%)	207 (30.10%)	43 (6.30%)
34	2009	81	8	43 (6.60%)	286 (44.10%)	239 (36.90%)	80 (12.40%)
35	2009	57	8	9 (2.00%)	152 (33.30%)	271 (59.40%)	24 (5.30%)
36	2009	73	8	53 (9.10%)	263 (45.00%)	242 (41.40%)	26 (4.50%)
37	2009	145	8	377 (32.50%)	481 (41.40%)	279 (24.10%)	23 (2.00%)
38	2010	93	8	96 (12.90%)	303 (40.70%)	273 (36.70%)	72 (9.70%)
39	2010	77	8	5 (0.80%)	375 (60.90%)	204 (33.10%)	32 (5.20%)
40	2010	186	8	39 (2.60%)	366 (24.60%)	719 (48.30%)	364 (24.50%)
TOTAL		3519	3519x 8 28152	2334	10912	11911	2995
				8.29%	38.76%	42.31%	10.64%

Extreme Case:

The college which awarded internal assessment scores from 17 to 20 in all the eight courses to all the successful students in a particular year was treated as an 'Extreme Case'.

Students:

Students refer to total number of internal assessment scores awarded by a college in one year in all the eight courses to all the successful candidates i.e. Number of successful candidates x 8. For example, if 63 candidates passed B.Ed. examinations in 2010 from a college, then the total number of internal assessment scores awarded by the college would be $63 \times 8 = 504$. In the present case, these 504 scores may further be split into maximum four groups i.e. candidates awarded internal assessment score of 17, 18, 19 and 20.

In order to identify Extreme Cases, at first the colleges which had awarded internal assessment scores 17 or more in any of the course in any of the year i.e. 2008, 2009 or 2010 were sorted out using minimum-maximum technique. After this, all those cases where the colleges had awarded internal assessment from 17 to 20 out of 20 in all the eight courses in any of the three years were taken out and treated as Extreme Cases. In this way, 40 such cases out of a possible 211 (67 for 2008 + 71 for 2009 + 73 for 2010) were identified as Extreme Cases. The detail of such cases is given in Table 1.

7. RESULTS:

Table 1 reveals the following:

1. In 40 (19 per cent) cases out of total 211 in three years, the students were awarded internal assessment marks between 17 and 20 in all the eight courses.
2. In one case, the college awarded 19 to 20 marks as internal assessment to all the students in all the eight courses.
Further, in this case only 10 percent students have been awarded a score of 19. The rest, 90 percent, have been awarded a score of 20 out of 20.
3. In one case, the college awarded 18 to 19 marks as internal assessment to all the students in all the eight courses.
In this case 87 per cent students were awarded 18 marks out of 20.
4. In eight cases, the colleges awarded 18 to 20 marks as internal assessment to all the students in all the eight courses.
In four of such cases, nearly 90 per cent or more students were awarded 19 or 20 marks out of 20.
5. In nineteen cases, the colleges awarded 17 to 19 marks as internal assessment to all the students in all the eight courses.

In eleven of such cases, 90 per cent or more students were awarded 18 or 19 marks out of 20.

6. In eleven cases, the colleges awarded 17 to 20 marks as internal assessment to all the students in all the eight courses. In nine of such cases, 90 per cent students were awarded 18 to 20 marks out of 20.
7. Out of 28152 only 2334 students (8.29%) were awarded 17 marks as internal assessment.
8. Out of 28152 as many as 22823 students (81.07%) were awarded 18 or 19 marks as internal assessment.
9. Out of 28152, 2995 students (10.64%) were awarded 20 out of 20 marks as internal assessment.
10. Interestingly, out of 2995 students who were awarded 20 out of 20 marks as internal assessment, 453 (15.13%) belonged to only one college. Still amazingly, the number of students admitted in this college was only 63. Had the college admitted full quota of 100 students, the figure could have gone much higher. Further, there were three more colleges which awarded 20 out of 20 to more than 50 per cent students.
11. Out of 40 colleges identified as Extreme Cases, 9, 15 and 16 belonged to the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively showing an upward trend over the years.
12. One college figured as 'Extreme Case' for all the three years.
13. Twelve colleges figured as 'Extreme Case' for two out of three years.
14. Seven colleges figured as 'Extreme Case' only once in three years.
15. Two colleges figured as 'Extreme Case' twice in two years (Established in 2008).
16. One college figured as 'Extreme Case' once in one year (Established in 2009).
17. One college figured as 'Extreme Case' once in two years ((Established in 2008).
18. Overall, 24 colleges figured as 'Extreme Case' one or more times.

8. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS:

The results indicate that there is a tendency towards over-marking in internal assessment and also that the internal assessment scores mostly fall towards the higher end of the scale in Bachelor of Education Programme run by Himachal Pradesh University. These results support the earlier findings of Kamat, 1972; Raina, 1972; Gunasekaran and Jayanthi, 1980; Rasool, Sarup and Sharma, 1981; Dabir, 1984; Bolashetty, 2002; Singh, 2010; and Rajendran, Mary, Christy and Mary, 2012. It may be pointed out that all of these researches have not been conducted at B.Ed. level.

As far as present piece of work is concerned, one may be inclined to conclude that these are isolated cases and the results cannot be generalized to the total samples.

However, the evidences are to the contrary. In a different analysis of the same data Bhadwal and Kishor (2012) observed that the frequency distributions for internal assessment in respect of eight courses give the impression that the internal assessment marks are well spread over a range of 7 to 20, however, the consolidated data indicates that a minimum of 82 per cent of students were awarded internal assessment more than 85 per cent during the three years. A maximum of 7 per cent students were awarded internal assessment 75 per cent or less during the three years. They further concluded that there was an upward trend in awarding internal assessment marks from the year 2008 to 2010 which was evident from the fact that in 2010, 83 to 87 per cent students were awarded internal assessment 85 percent or more in different subjects which was higher than the preceding years. Thus it may be said that if isolated cases of 13, 14, 15 or 16 are not considered, there will be many more Extreme Cases in three years.

The over marking may be ascribed to the facts that (i) the prescribed internal assessment policy is vague, (ii) there is absence of moderation policy either at institutional or university level, and (iii) the teachers or institutions are not accountable for under or over marking.

The reason for the upward trend in over marking from 2008 to 2010 may be attributed to the experience gained by the colleges over the years. It was observed that in the initial years of the introduction of internal assessment component, the colleges were hesitant in excessive over marking. But with the passing years the colleges' managements felt that no one objected to the type of internal assessment awarded by them and they were answerable to none. Further, there was no provision of moderation either at the institutional or university level. This prompted them for increased over marking during the succeeding years.

It has been mentioned earlier that barring two, all the seventy one teacher-training institutions are being managed privately. The managements of private colleges are conscious of the image of their institution. They believe that superior results will help to enhance the credibility of their college and in turn will attract more students in the ensuing academic sessions. This further encourages them to adopt exceedingly liberal attitude in awarding internal assessment marks to their students.

In this context, it is relevant to refer Chapter IX: Teaching Methods, Guidance and Evaluation of Education and National Development: Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66, Volume II:

9.86- We are aware that the experience of introducing internal assessment has not been very happy so far and that there has been persistent over-assessment by the weaker schools. This has led some critics to suggest that the system should be abandoned altogether. We cannot agree with this view. Internal assessment has to continue and its importance will have to be increasingly emphasized. To overcome the shortcomings discovered, we make the following recommendations:

1. The results of the internal assessment and external examination should not be combined because the purposes and techniques of the two evaluations are different and because the results of the internal assessment of the different institutions are not strictly comparable. The results of the external and internal assessment should, therefore, be shown separately in the certificate(s) given at the end of the course.

2. It should be an important point in the inspections of schools to review the internal assessment made and to examine the correlation between the internal and external assessments. Persistence in over-assessment should be regarded as a weakness in the school programmes. It should be taken due note of while classifying the schools and should also be related to grants-in-aid so that institutions which tend to over-assess their students persistently would stand to lose in status and finance. The grant-in-aid rules should also authorize the Education Department to withdraw recognition for persistent irresponsible assessment.

And also Chapter XI: Higher Education: Objectives and Improvement of Education and National Development: Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66, Volume III:

11.54 We realize, however, that external examinations will remain with us for a long time, especially in universities which have large number of affiliated colleges of very unequal standards. The main strategy here would be to attack the problem on two fronts: introduction of more frequent, periodical assessment so that the undue emphasis on the final examination as the sole determinant of success is reduced; and reform of evaluation techniques. With regard to the first, a good deal can be gained if the performance of the student is assessed throughout the session in a suitable manner and if periodical tests are held in the middle and at the end of each term. A system of internal assessment should be introduced as a supplement to the external examination, based on such periodical evaluations. The results of these internal assessments should not be mechanically added to the external marks but kept separate and both should be shown side by side in the final certificate. Passes should be required separately

in both and the divisions gained in them should be declared separately. Every year, a careful review should be made of the correlation between internal and external assessment separately for each institution. This should be taken as a point for classification of colleges and also related to grant-in-aid so that institutions which tend to over-assess their students persistently would stand to lose in status and finance. The regulations may also authorize the university to withdraw affiliation for persistent irresponsible assessment.

The Commission visualized the problem forty six years ago but we have failed to understand its implications. In the existing scheme for Bachelor of Education programme, the internal and external assessment marks are added and shown as cumulative scores in the final certificate. There is no provision of moderation at any stage and there is no check of any kind over the institutions in respect of the methodology adopted for awarding internal assessment scores. Besides, there are plenty of research evidences to show the casual approach or misuse of the concept on the part of the teachers. Yet the component of internal assessment was implemented in colleges and universities just because of UGC guidelines without evolving a proper strategy. Then after three to four years of its introduction, none did care to see how efficiently and gainfully the scheme has been implemented; whether it is playing the role it was expected to play; or how the students and teachers are responding to it.

In this scenario, the authors are compelled to ask "Is there any relevance of component of internal assessment in Bachelor of Education programme run by Himachal Pradesh University?"

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