

Editorial

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Published online: 6 November 2014
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The papers included in this final issue of the volume are from South Korea, the USA and Spain. The authors share studies that highlight several key assessment and accountability challenges facing countries around the world including computer literacy, leadership assessment and the relationship between teacher and leader perceptions of leaders and value-added assessment and modeling. The final paper highlights the compatibility and alignment of current electronic assessment tools for teacher training programmes and their alignment with national standards. As a collection, these papers cover a range of important topics that range from elementary students to adults within university learning and school settings.

The first paper, ‘Assessing the computational literacy of elementary students on a national level in Korea’, explores the Information and Communication Technology programme initiated by the Korea’s Ministry of Education in 2000. The 2007 revisions of the programme introduced a focus on computational thinking and informational ethics. Jun, Han, Kim and Lee developed a new analytical test to measure computational literacy amongst 40,072 elementary students nationally. Using the Angoff method to analyse the difference between expert and student performance on the tests, the team found that students’ CL scores were remarkably lower than their scores on fundamental concepts and contemporary skills. The paper makes recommendations for researchers and educators to develop strategies to expand and apply computational literacy to a broader range of educational fields.

The second paper is entitled ‘Predicting the gap: perceptual congruence between American principals and their teachers’ ratings of leadership effectiveness’. Goff, Goldring and Bickman present their study exploring the extent to which principals’ self-ratings of leadership effectiveness coincides with their teachers’ perceptions of their leadership effectiveness. The survey evidence is drawn from 76 principals and over 2100 teachers who completed parallel forms of a 72-item Learning-Centered Leadership survey (VAL-ED©) in the USA. Teacher and principal characteristics are incorporated into a multivariate regression analysis. The study found that even with zero difference in the overall sample, teachers and principals within any given school

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seldom share the same perspective. Principals' self-efficacy was a strong predictor of principals rating themselves higher than the teachers. An increase in the time teachers and leaders spent together decreased the congruence of their perspectives. Overall, the research identified large disparities in perceptions of leadership between teachers and their principals and suggests that structured teacher feedback as a potential route for principals to gain knowledge of the influence of their leadership on their teacher colleagues.

The third paper by Lopez-Martin, Kuosmanen and Gaviria is entitled 'Linear and nonlinear growth models for value-added assessment: an application to Spanish primary and secondary schools' progress in reading comprehension'. The paper brings attention to the important issue of assessing student learning in subjects where non-linear growth is often found. The paper focuses on schools' value-added under non-linear growth models where changes in performance follows a quadratic trajectory, analysing differences in results with respect to those provided by linear growth models. The authors estimated the value-added in reading comprehension for three parallel cohorts that collect data from 153 primary and secondary schools in Madrid (Spain) and 6755 students who were assessed at four different times during the academic years 2005–2006 and 2006–2007. Using hierarchical linear modeling, the study found that non-linear growth models provide a better fit and the inclusion of the students' individual and family characteristics in the model provides more accurate VA measures for schools.

The final paper by Kirchner and Norman is entitled 'Evaluation of electronic assessment systems within the USA and their ability to meet the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standard 2'. The study explored what types (commercial, in-house or hybrid) of electronic assessment systems (EASs) are currently being used at university-based educator preparation programmes and how well the systems were serving their intended purposes. An electronic survey of 225 NCATE coordinators (31 % response rate) examined the relative importance of different system components including system's ability to systematically collect data, faculty access to the data, the ability to aggregate data, the ability to collect multiple assessments and the costs associated with the system. The findings will support the important policy and practice work of educators working to support teacher education programmes.

As the final issue of this volume of EAEA goes to press, the editorial team on behalf of our editorial board would like to thank everyone for their on-going support, time and efforts over the year. We hope that as the 2014 calendar year comes to a close, our contributors, colleagues and readers find moments of peace in their busy schedules to reflect on their work, successes and challenges of the year. We encourage you to share your studies with us in 2015.