**Editorial**

This issue invites you to look at developments in educational testing in a number of countries. Immediately following this overview, you will find a guest editorial by Wim van der Linden, in which he provides a context for the first four articles, which describe the status of testing in individual countries, and the fine perspectives piece by Lyle V. Jones, which discusses each article and the entire set. I want to give credit to Anthony J. Nitko for initiating the review process for these articles during his editorship of EM:IP. I also want to thank Professor van der Linden, for not only organizing the NCME symposium at which these articles were originally presented, but also for contributing his valuable talents as a guest editor at all stages in the development of this issue.

The last article, by Michael J. Feuer and Kathleen Fulton, presents a set of "lessons" drawn from an analysis of educational and testing practices in seven countries, including the U.S. Two of the four countries included in the van der Linden set, Sweden and the United Kingdom, are also reviewed in this piece.

Because Wim van der Linden has provided the general introduction to the articles that is the customary content of this editorial, I will instead try to contribute to your reading by sharing some of my own reactions to the articles. Even as I present my own perspective, I recognize that each EM:IP reader will bring his or her own interests to this issue and will focus on the points that he or she cares most about.

As someone who works on college admissions testing in the U.S., it intrigues me, for example, to consider that Sweden's college admissions examination was introduced to provide an alternative admissions path for older students. Similarly, the notion that Israel's college entrance test is routinely translated into five languages is very thought provoking. It is also the case, as Lyle Jones highlights for us, that gender differences in test performance are a substantial focus of research in both Sweden and Israel.

Turning to school-level testing, I greatly appreciated the observation by Thio regarding testing in the Netherlands, "CITO [the National Institute for Educational Measurement] has had to win its place in the educational scene by patient maneuvering and by assiduous promotion of rational testing principles." (Three cheers for rational testing!) I also noticed that both the article by Desmond Nuttall and Gordon Stobart about testing in the U.K. and the Feuer and Fulton article pay special attention to the role of teachers' professional judgment in the assessment process.

In addition to these articles, this issue contains Kathleen Hebbeler's review of Assessment in Early Childhood Education (G. M. Blenkins & A. V. Kelly, eds.), a book critical of testing in the U.K. In it Hebbeler credits the authors for an excellent treatment of the need for assessments for young children, but judges that they have "muddied" the issues of the form and purpose for assessments. Also, James McBride writes supporting Gregory Cizek's EM:IP 12(3) basic points regarding "computerization" of educational testing but arguing that the article contains a "noteworthy error of fact."

John J. Fremer, Editor

**Internationalization in Educational Measurement**

Interest in international comparisons of the use of achievement tests and exams is not a new phenomenon. Test publishers and administrative organizations in charge of national exams have always had their international contacts—both incidentally and through organizations such as the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and the International Test Commission. Knowledge of examination procedures for admission to schools is also common at the World Bank. However, unlike psychological tests, achievement tests are seldom used internationally. One notable exception is the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Also, it seems safe to assert that the interest in international comparisons, though a long tradition, has not pervaded the field of educational measurement. For example, textbooks on educational measurement typically pay no attention to national differences in testing formats or in the use of knowledge of international developments in educational measurement can, therefore, be characterized as institutional rather than documentary, fragmented rather than systematic, and entertained by a few specialists rather than common knowledge among measurement specialists worldwide. Because of a strong global trend toward internationalization, this situation is expected to change rapidly. National governments as well as local corporations realize that soon they will have to compete in a global market. Unmistakable signs of this new challenge are the open borders between the member states of the European Community (EC) as of the beginning of 1992, the recent signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and, at a truly global level, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) reached just before the end of 1993. This emerging new international economic order has its consequences for national educational systems. First, student exchanges are perceived more and more as a powerful way of preparing students for the international labor market. Educational institutions in English-speaking countries have always had a strong tradition of hosting foreign students and, in doing so, exposing their own students to different cultures. A new phenomenon in the EC is the Erasmus program, which promotes the exchange of students between colleges and universities in the member states and guarantees that credits earned at host institutions are automatically approved at home institutions. In the same spirit, professional organizations around the world recognize that they will have to cope with an international labor market in the near future, and some of them have already started working on the alignment of their certification procedures. A third development is a growing interest among governments in running programs of assessment of educational progress and in finding out how their national achievements rank internationally.

In view of all these developments, the organization of a special symposium on International Perspectives on Educational Testing by the organizers of a recent NCME Annual Meeting was a timely measure. The papers read at the symposium have been elaborated on and rewritten and included in this special issue of Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice. Two of the articles deal with the issue of admission to higher education institutions. Michal Beller and Ingemar Wedman describe the admission procedures used in Israel and Sweden as well as the role played by the Psychometric Entrance Test (PET) and the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test (SweSAT) in these procedures. Djien K. Thio gives a broader description of the Dutch educational system and its use of standardized tests in primary and secondary education as well as in national exams and assessment studies. The topic of assessment is also addressed in the fourth contribution by the late Desmond L. Nuttall and Gordon Stobart. Their article describes the national curriculum assessment in Great Britain, the Standardized Assessment Tasks (SATs) used to assess the British educational achievements, as well as the fixed standards against which the achievements are evaluated. In a concluding discussion, Lyle V. Jones provides an evaluation of the four articles and relates national developments to each other.

This special section describes only some of the developments in educational measurement in four different countries. It does not cover any of the technical, linguistic, societal, or practical topics involved in a true internationalization of educational measurement. These topics include item translation, establishment of international achievement scales for use in placement of exchange students, international equity issues, and the comparison of educational progress, item and test bias against national cultures and curricula, test equating, problems of test secrecy in international testing operations, and the use of information technology for international test delivery or administration. No doubt such topics will dominate the agenda of educational measurement in the near future. But a first step to the exact formulation is a careful description of the current educational systems and measurement practices around the world.

I hope this issue gives you a taste of the international differences in measurement practices as well as of the fascinating international development to come.

Wim J. van der Linden, Guest Editor

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