



A Message from the Editorial Team

We are eager to share with you the findings of research studies that tackle international issues around assessment, policy, and the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue gives you some insight into the roles of teachers, principals, and students in shaping educational systems.

Sincerely, Lindsay Mainhood and Sofia Melendez (RiaN@queensu.ca)

How do Chinese school principals' conceptions of assessment shape their approaches to grading in an examination-oriented culture?

David Baidoo-Anu, PhD Student

What are Ghanaian Teachers' Beliefs and Perspectives of the National Teachers' Standards Policy?

Kenneth Gyamerah, PhD Student

Why is this topic important?

- School principals play a key leadership role in school effectiveness and student success. However, principals' understanding of assessment and grading has received relatively little attention globally. Understanding principals' assessment conceptions in relation to their grading practices is critical to support consistent assessment and grading practices in schools, particularly in an examination-oriented culture in China.

What did this research uncover?

- Principals conceived summative and formative assessment as inseparable. As a result, it will be substantially difficult for principals to support implementation of assessment that does not involve the use of examinations.
- Principals who are concerned primarily with the use of students' grade (e.g., accountability) may be more likely to conceive assessments as irrelevant. They may be more likely to agree with the practice of inflating students grades to avoid consequences of grade use.

Why do these findings matter?

- To help school principals appropriately use and report assessment and grades, there should be an accountability framework that re-positions assessment and grading practices in an examination-oriented culture to support and improve student success.

Cheng, L., Baidoo-Anu, D., & DeLuca, C. (under review). Understanding school principals' conceptions of assessment and grading practices. *Educational Research and Evaluation*.

Why is this topic important?

- The critical role of teachers in education policymaking has been documented in the literature. However, few studies in the Ghanaian context examine teachers' beliefs and perspectives of educational policies at the national level.

What did this research uncover?

- Teachers who have worked for more than five years perceived that the National Teachers' Standards' (NTS) Policy is generic and has been imposed by policy actors to control the teaching profession.
- Teachers who have worked for less than five years perceived that the NTS Policy will improve professional practice and conduct of all teachers.
- The NTS Policy seems to neglect teachers' voices and their agency.
- Although the NTS policy focuses broadly on teachers' daily activities in school, their choice of pedagogy, assessment strategies, and subject matter knowledge, the policy neglects their motivational, social and emotional needs.

Why do these findings matter?

- We need to prioritize the inclusion of teachers in creating and enacting teacher education policies such as Teacher Evaluation Systems (TES) and national teachers' standards.

Gyamerah, K. (2021). *Examining Ghanaian teachers perspectives and beliefs of the National Teachers Standards (NTS) Policy*. Paper Presentation accepted for the 65th Annual Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Conference 2021, Seattle, USA.

How did the COVID pandemic affect teachers and school leaders? A look at acculturative stress, adaptive leadership, and sojourning Canadian educators.

Rebecca Stroud Stasel, PhD Candidate

Why is this topic important?

- The COVID pandemic has hit the educational sector hard. School leaders and teachers have adapted quickly to bring forth their best educational responses to this pandemic. The stakeholder needs and contexts are diverse. Discussions about how teachers and leaders have adapted to the pandemic are critical for a resilient and flourishing future for students and educators.

What did this research uncover?

- This study explored the acculturative experiences of some Canadian-trained teachers sojourning and teaching in Southeast and East Asia where the pandemic struck first.
- Their experiences included heightened acculturative stress, which led to adaptive self- and organizational leadership strategies on the part of participants in the study.

Why do these findings matter?

- Preliminary findings call for the development of an adaptive leadership agenda and scholarship regarding teaching in times of turbulence.

Stroud Stasel, R. (2020). Learning to walk all over again: Insights from some international school educators and school leaders in South, Southeast and East Asia during the COVID crisis. *International Studies in Educational Administration* 48(3), 95-101.

Catch up on #RiaN4Teachers Volume 5:

How do Ontario kindergarten teachers conceptualize classroom assessment?

How can teachers use the arts as a tool to support students with exceptionalities?

How can distributed leadership mobilize networked learning?

Are internal assets and external resources the building blocks for developing student resilience?

Read much more #RiaN4Teachers, including Volumes 1-4, at educ.queensu.ca/research-in-a-nutshell

Contributing Researchers



David Baidoo-Anu,
PhD Student
[Profile](#)



Kenneth Gyamerah,
PhD Student
[Profile](#)



Rebecca Stroud Stasel,
PhD Candidate
[Profile](#)