
The Relationship Between Communication Climate and Elementary Teachers' Beliefs About Alternative Assessment

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Alternative assessment in education is becoming widely implemented around the Pacific region. This study conducted a multilevel analysis of communication climate and beliefs about the effectiveness of alternative assessment. Participants were 662 teachers from 75 elementary schools in Korea. The findings showed that teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of alternative assessment were positively influenced by their perception of communication climate at their schools and their perception of support from principals, peer teachers, students and parents. The effect of teachers' endorsement of textbook-based learning was moderated by school-level communication climate. The findings indicated that an open communication climate at schools is a key for the successful implementation of alternative assessment.

Keywords: communication climate, alternative assessment, elementary school teachers

The paradigm of assessment in education has been shifting. Traditional standardised assessment has been criticised for putting excessive value on rote learning at the cost of fundamental understanding and reflection (Moody, 1991) and turning students into passive learners who need only to memorise answers (Hart, 1994). Starting in the late 1980s, concerned educators began to look for assessment tools that enable students to explain, apply, critique and justify their own responses (Janesick, 2001). In response to the call for reforming evaluation procedures, alternative methods of assessment have emerged. Alternative assessment provides rich, realistic information about students' achievement, encourages their active participation and holds them to high expectations for in-depth understandings of challenging academic content (Stiggins, 1994; Svinicki, 2004).

The implementation of alternative assessment cannot be successful without teachers' confidence in its effectiveness over traditional methods. Considering that alternative assessment is significantly more labour-intensive and time-consuming than traditional standardised assessment, teachers' strong beliefs in its effectiveness are essential to motivate them to incorpo-

rate alternative assessment into the classroom. Therefore, investigating the factors that affect teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of alternative assessment would have important implications for successful implementation.

The current study examined three factors that may affect teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment. An open communication climate may motivate teachers to express their opinions and exchange innovative ideas about evaluation methods, and therefore strengthen teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment. Teachers' beliefs may be bolstered by support from fellow teachers, students, parents and school principals. In contrast, if teachers adhere to traditional textbook-based learning, they may be less confident about experimenting with new assessment methods.

Below is a brief discussion of alternative assessment, followed by rationale and hypotheses concerning the effects of an open communication climate, support for alternative assessment and endorsement of textbook-based learning.

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Alternative Assessment

Assessment is a process of obtaining information about students' learning that guides a variety of decisions and actions (Neill et al., 1995). In today's environment of increasing diversity and complexity, teachers need to know much more about students' characteristics (Heywood, 2000). Traditional standardised tests are often criticised for failing to assess multidimensional aspects of students' learning (Darling-Hammond, Rustique-Forrester, & Pecheone, 2005), turning students into passive rote learners and fostering test-driven classroom instruction (Cole, Ryan, Kick, & Matheis, 2000; Hart, 1994; Moody, 1991); therefore, alternative assessment methods have been sought (Birenbaum, 2003, Stiggins, 1994).

Alternative assessment is an umbrella term for a variety of nontraditional assessment methods and techniques including performance assessment, holistic assessment and authentic assessment. Alternative assessment includes various methods of evaluation, such as open-ended or extended response exercises, classroom observation, portfolios, performance exams, essays and group projects (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; FairTest, 1992; Sweet & Zimmermann, 1992). While traditional examinations rely on indirect or proxy items, alternative assessment uses direct and holistic measurements of what students know (Wiggins, 1990). Alternative assessment emphasises higher-order thinking skills, judgment, collaboration and active learning by embedding the assessment inside as well as outside classrooms (Hacker & Hathaway, 1991; Sweet & Zimmermann, 1992; Tombari & Borich, 1999). Moreover, it helps improve teachers' morale and performance and strengthen student commitment and capacity for self-monitoring (Moody, 1991).

Alternative assessment emerged in a number of countries around the Pacific region. In the United States, for example, along with federal governmental involvement in assessment reform, a number of states committed to alternative assessment as public education policy (Khatti & Sweet, 1996). The implementation of alternative assessment in Australia and New Zealand has paralleled initiatives also occurring in the European countries including the United Kingdom and the Netherlands (Clarke, 1996). The practice of assessment is changing even in Asian countries, including Japan and Hong Kong, where assessment relied heavily on standardised tests (Butler, 1997; Tse, 2002).

Since alternative assessment was first introduced in Korea in 1996, it became the focus of the educational reform agenda. However, its implementation has faced significant challenges. The unclear definitions of alternative assessment and inconsistent policies regarding implementation led to confusion among teachers. Most schools were not prepared to adopt new assessment methods and training for teachers was neither appropriate nor intensive enough (Huh et al., 1999). As a consequence, attitudes

toward alternative assessment may vary widely across individual teachers and schools.

Wherever new evaluation methods are introduced, unequivocal support and instantly successful implementation are hardly to be expected. Schools may face significant challenges in the process of implementation (DiMartino, Castaneda, Brownstein, & Miles, 2007). For example, the subjectivity of alternative assessment may make it difficult to achieve consistency in grading (Brennan & Johnson, 1995; Hacker & Hathaway, 1991). Moreover, sophisticated criteria for judging student performance may make assessment to be labour-intensive and time-consuming (Brindley, 2001; Popham, 1993). To deal with such challenges while also convincing teachers of the effectiveness of alternative assessment, the current study examines the effects of an open communication climate, support from school constituencies and teachers' adherence to traditional textbook-based learning.

Communication Climate

A communication climate represents organisational members' perceptions of information flow and communication practices (Pace, 1994). Jablin (1985) defined an open communication climate as one in which both parties perceive the other to be a willing and receptive listener and refrain from responses that might be seen as negative or disapproving. In the present study, the openness of a communication climate was conceptualised as the extent to which teachers perceived the climate at their school to be supportive of discussing and trying new ideas.

An open climate facilitates the implementation of new ideas and experiments (Tu, Vonderembse, Ragu-Nathan, & Sharkey, 2005) by making organisational members perceive change as positive (Levinson & Asahi, 1995), improving their learning (Nevis, DiBella, & Gould, 1995), and encouraging risk-taking (Roth, Maruchek, Kemp, & Trimble, 1994). Unclear information about the nature of alternative assessment and uncertainty about effectiveness were major issues affecting the implementation of alternative assessment in schools (Prestine & McGreal, 1997). In an open communication climate, teachers may feel comfortable exchanging information, sharing ideas and discussing new assessment methods. Thus, a hypothesis is advanced as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The more likely teachers are to perceive an open communication climate in schools, the stronger beliefs these teachers will have in the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Support for Alternative Assessment

Organisational support has a significant influence on attempts to implement alternative assessment (DiMartino et al., 2007). Support from fellow teachers and school principals can be a necessary condition for

successful implementation. Without their strong support, implementation of alternative assessment may increase tension and conflicts among teachers, mostly between supporters and opponents of change in classroom practices and assessment methods (Presine & McGreal, 1997). At the same time, students and parents' roles may make their support crucial for the successful implementation. Instead of being passive test-takers, students are required to be active participants in assessment activities. Some schools use parents as volunteers to observe and evaluate their children's achievement (Hart, 1994). Therefore, perceived support from school constituencies (i.e., principals, fellow teachers, students and parents) is predicted to be positively associated with teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Hypothesis 2: The greater support teachers perceive for alternative assessment, the stronger their beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment will be.

Textbook-Based Learning

Traditional textbook-based learning can be characterised by its emphasis on memorisation of objective information, textbook knowledge and teachers' downward delivery of clear answers to students. Traditional textbook-based learning leads students to focus on isolated

objectives and fractured skills (Wiggins, 1993). Adherence to textbooks narrows the diversity of the curriculum, focuses on discrete skills and fosters a one-right-answer mentality (Hambleton & Murphy, 1991). Reliance on textbooks and emphasis on 'one correct answer' types of knowledge could make teachers unwilling to take students' real world examples into account and hesitant to try various assessment methods. This tendency may be pronounced in Asian countries such as Korea and Japan, where schools were mandated to use government-designated textbooks and the national-level standardised tests were developed based on those textbooks. In this respect, it is expected that strong endorsement of traditional textbook-oriented classroom practices would be negatively associated with teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Hypothesis 3: The more strongly teachers endorse textbook-based learning, the weaker will be their beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Teacher-Level and School-Level Predictors

A multilevel structure of data in an educational system can help untangle how constructs operate at different levels (Burstein, 1980). The perceptions of an open communication climate may be examined at the level of the

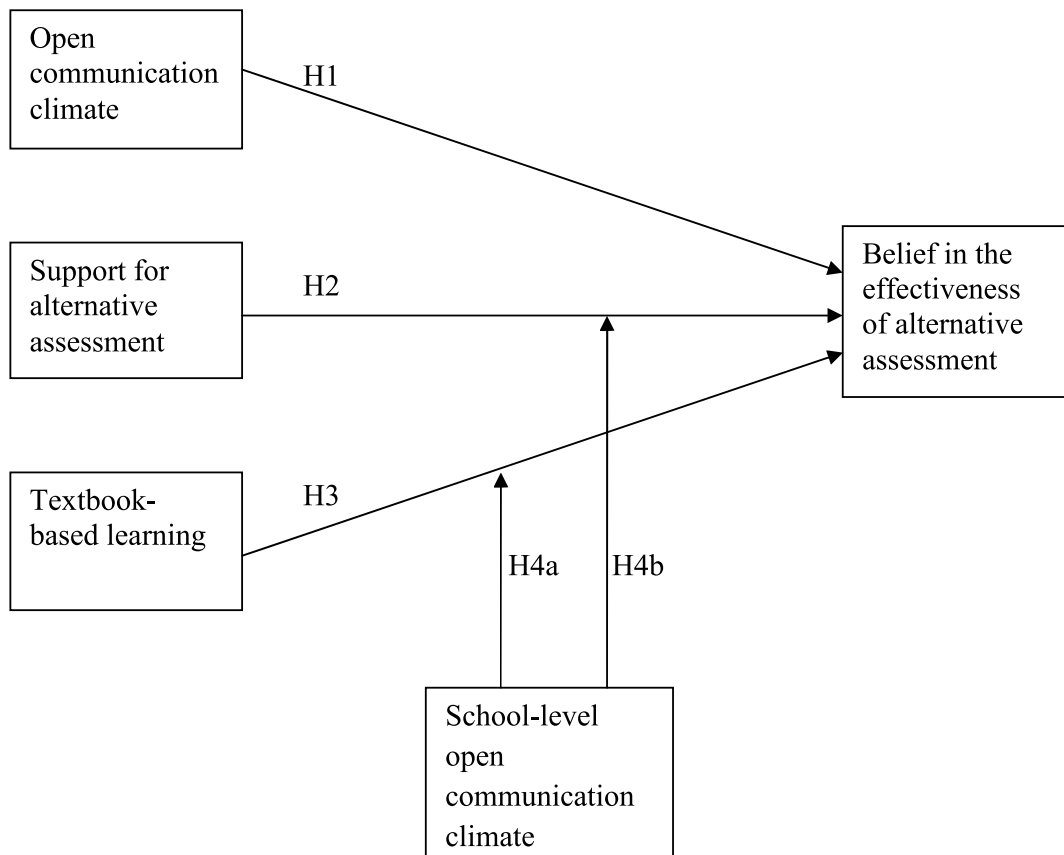


Figure 1
The proposed model.

individual teacher and also at the level of the school. When individual teachers' perceptions of an open communication climate are averaged for each of their respective schools, the average perception of the openness of the communication climate represents a school-level openness of its communication climate. A cross-level interaction occurs when a school-level predictor explains a significant amount of the variance in the relationship between an individual-level predictor and the individual-level dependent variable. That is, the school-level communication climate can influence the relationship between individual-level predictors (i.e., teachers' perceived support and endorsement of textbook-based learning) and the individual-level dependent variable (perceived effectiveness of alternative assessment).

Hypothesis 4: An open communication climate on the school level will affect the ways endorsement of textbook-based learning (H4a) and perceived support from school constituencies (H4b) are related to beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Proposed Model

The above mentioned four hypotheses are summarised in a model as shown in Figure 1. In short, two teacher-level variables — open communication climate (H1) and support for alternative assessment (H2) — were predicted to be positively related to belief in the effectiveness of alternative assessment; whereas one teacher-level variable — textbook-based learning (H3) — was predicted to be negatively related to belief in the effectiveness of alternative assessment. School-level climate of open communication was predicted to moderate the extent to which textbook-based learning (H4a) and support for alternative assessment (H4b) were related to belief in the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Method

A questionnaire was developed to assess teachers' belief in the effectiveness of alternative assessment, the openness of the communication climate, perceived support for alternative assessment and endorsement of textbook-based learning. A questionnaire was distributed either by postal mail or in person to teachers in elementary schools. Teachers who voluntarily participated in the current study completed the questionnaire and returned it to the researchers.

Participants

Participants were teachers ($N = 662$, 84.59% women) employed at 75 elementary schools located in Seoul and nearby satellite cities in Korea. The teachers had an average of 10.81 years of ($SD = 9.27$) teaching experience. The schools had on average 37 students ($SD = 4.43$) in each classroom. This sample was appropriate for the current study because the schools varied in the

extent to which they had implemented alternative assessment as an alternative evaluation method.

Measurements

All of the measures were on a 6-point Likert scale with anchors of 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 6 (*strongly agree*). The measures were written in Korean and developed by one of the authors in consideration of definitions and characteristics of each construct. A confirmatory factor analysis showed that the measurement items for the four variables were composed of four separate dimensions and the four-factor solution showed acceptable fit to the data (Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .91, Incremental Fit Index [IFI] = .91, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .07). The correlations among the three independent variables (openness of the communication climate, textbook-based learning and support for alternative assessment) were not substantial, ranging from $-.02$ to $.22$, and multicollinearity was not a serious issue.

Belief in alternative assessment effectiveness. Seven items ($\alpha = .89$, $M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.86$) assessed individual teachers' belief in the effectiveness of alternative assessment (BELIEF) for teaching social studies. Example items included 'I think that alternative assessment is good for education' and 'Alternative assessment in social studies can help students to learn better'. The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) for BELIEF was $.11$, $\chi^2(73) = 159.92$, $p < .001$.

Textbook-based learning. Six items ($\alpha = .77$, $M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.85$) assessed individual teachers' endorsements of textbook-based learning (TEXT) in social studies. Example items included 'Students can learn best when taught with textbooks in social studies' and 'Information and interpretations in textbooks are always accurate'. The ICC for TEXT was $.02$, $\chi^2(73) = 87.45$, $p = .14$.

Openness of the communication climate. Six items ($\alpha = .82$, $M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.84$) assessed individual teachers' perceptions of the openness of the communication climate at their schools (OPEN). Example items included 'Teachers discuss inside school what each of them newly learned in their workshops outside school', 'Teachers share ideas and discuss students' learning outcomes and achievements' and 'The overall climate in the school encourages trying new ideas'. The ICC for OPEN was $.12$, $\chi^2(73) = 166.38$, $p < .001$.

Support for alternative assessment. Four items ($\alpha = .72$, $M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.76$) assessed the extent to which individual teachers considered school constituencies (i.e., the principal, fellow teachers, students and parents) to be supportive of student alternative assessment (SUPPORT). Example items included 'The principal at my school supports me in using alternative assessment' and 'The parents of students at my school support me in

using alternative assessment'. The ICC for SUPPORT was .04, $\chi^2(73) = 111.31, p = .004$.

Results

The current study tested four hypotheses, all of which included individual teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment (BELIEF) as the dependent variable. Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 included individual teachers' perceptions of the openness of the communication climate at their schools (OPEN), perceived support for alternative assessment (SUPPORT) and endorsement of textbook-based learning (TEXT) as the independent variables. Hypothesis 4 predicted that the relations among the variables specified in hypotheses 1 and 2 would be moderated by the school-level openness of its communication climate (OPEN-M), which was calculated as an average of individual teachers' perceptions of the openness of the communication climate for each school. That is, hypothesis 4 predicted a cross-level interaction that specified a school-level independent variable as a moderator for the relations of individual-level independent variables and the dependent variable.

Overview

The data were analysed with hierarchical linear modelling (HLM; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) because the individual teachers were nested in their respective schools. The multilevel analysis allowed partitioning of variance in the dependent variable (BELIEF) into between-individual (i.e., individual-level, level-1) and between-school (i.e., school-level, level-2) components. Then, individual-level predictors (OPEN, SUPPORT and TEXT) were used to explain the individual-level variance in BELIEF and school-level independent variables (e.g., OPEN-M) were used to explain the school-level variance in BELIEF. The individual-level predictors were group-mean centred (i.e., each individual teacher's score was transformed to be a deviation score from his/her respective school mean) and school means of OPEN, TEXT, and SUPPORT (noted as OPEN-M, TEXT-M and SUPPORT-M) were included as predictors of the variance in individual-level intercept (i.e., the adjusted school mean in BELIEF) for properly testing cross-level interaction effects. Group-mean centring is appropriate for separating within-school and

Table 1
Results from the Final Model

Fixed effect	Coefficient	SE	t	p
Model for group means				
Intercept, γ_{00}	4.11	0.05	77.62	< .001
OPEN-M, γ_{01}	0.15	0.13	1.20	.23
TEXT-M, γ_{02}	-0.05	0.20	-0.25	.81
SUPPORT-M, γ_{03}	0.35	0.17	2.01	< .05
Model for the OPEN-belief slope				
Intercept, γ_{10}	0.11	0.04	3.01	< .01
Model for the TEXT-belief slope				
Intercept, γ_{20}	-0.04	0.04	-0.96	.34
OPEN-M, γ_{21}	-0.17	0.08	-2.08	< .05
Model for the SUPPORT-belief slope				
Intercept, γ_{30}	0.36	0.06	6.36	< .001
Random effect				
School mean, u_{0j}	Variance component	df	χ^2	p
School mean, u_{0j}	0.08	46	122.90	< .001
OPEN slope, u_{1j}	0.01	49	44.62	.50
TEXT slope, u_{2j}	0.01	48	52.77	.30
SUPPORT slope, u_{3j}	0.06	49	65.60	.06
Level-1 effect, r_{ij}	0.55			

Note: Equations illustrating the model

$$\text{Belief}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{OPEN}_i)^* + \beta_{2j}(\text{TEXT}_i)^* + \beta_{3j}(\text{SUPPORT}_i)^* + r_{ij}$$

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{OPEN-M})^{\#} + \gamma_{02}(\text{TEXT-M})^{\#} + \gamma_{03}(\text{SUPPORT-M})^{\#} + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + u_{1j}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21}(\text{OPEN-M})^{\#} + u_{2j}$$

$$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} + u_{3j}$$

* group-mean centred; # grand-mean centred

Belief_{ij} is belief in performance assessment effectiveness for individuals *i* (*i* = 1, 2, ... *n*) in school *j* (*j* = 1, 2, ... *J*)

OPEN-M_j: school mean of teachers' perceptions of the openness of the communication climate in their schools *j* (*j* = 1, 2, ... *J*)

TEXT-M_j: school mean of teachers' endorsements of textbook-based learning in their schools *j* (*j* = 1, 2, ... *J*)

SUPPORT-M_j: school mean of teachers' perceived support for performance assessment in their schools *j* (*j* = 1, 2, ... *J*)

between-school effects and for testing a cross-level interaction effect (Park, 2008; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Table 1 shows the result of the HLM analysis.

Multilevel Effects of OPEN, TEXT, and SUPPORT on BELIEF

Individual-level relationships (H1, H2, and H3). Hypotheses 1 and 2 predicted that the more likely teachers were to perceive that their schools had an open communication climate (OPEN) and support for alternative assessment (SUPPORT), the stronger their belief in alternative assessment effectiveness would be (BELIEF). Hypothesis 3 predicted that the more strongly teachers endorsed a textbook-based learning (TEXT), the weaker their beliefs in alternative assessment effectiveness would be. When OPEN, SUPPORT and TEXT were included in the analysis as individual-level predictors, these three predictors explained 15% of the individual-level variance in BELIEF. As shown in Table 1, OPEN was a significant and positive predictor of BELIEF, unstandardised coefficient = 0.11, $t = 3.01$, $p < .01$. SUPPORT was also a significant and positive predictor of BELIEF, unstandardised coefficient = 0.36, $t = 6.36$, $p < .001$. On the other hand, TEXT was not a significant predictor of BELIEF, unstandardised coefficient = -0.04 , $t = -0.96$, $p = .34$. Thus, the data were consistent with hypotheses 1 and 2 but inconsistent with hypothesis 3.

Cross-level interaction (H4). Hypothesis 4 predicted that the school-level average of the openness of communication climate (OPEN-M) would moderate the relationship between TEXT and BELIEF (H4a) and the relationship between SUPPORT and BELIEF (H4b). Before including OPEN-M as a school-level predictor to test a cross-level interaction, the variance in the slope of TEXT and the variance in the slope of SUPPORT were checked to see if they differed significantly from zero. That is, if the effect of TEXT on BELIEF and the effect of SUPPORT on BELIEF varied significantly across schools, a school-level predictor could be introduced to explain that variance. The results showed that the slope of TEXT had significant variance, $\chi^2(49) = 70.67$, $p = .02$, while the slope of SUPPORT did not, $\chi^2(49) = 57.53$, $p = .19$. Recall that, from the above-mentioned test results for hypotheses 2 and 3, the slope (i.e., the effect) of TEXT on BELIEF was not significant, whereas the slope (i.e., the effect) of SUPPORT on BELIEF was significant and positive. Testing the overall size (i.e., the mean) of a slope is different from testing the variance of the slope. What these tests showed here was that the average slope of TEXT on BELIEF across individuals did not differ from zero, but the slope of TEXT significantly varied across schools; for example, in some schools the effect of TEXT on BELIEF was positive or near zero, whereas in other schools the effect of TEXT on BELIEF was negative. On the other hand, the slope of SUPPORT on BELIEF was positive across individuals, but did not vary across schools; regardless of the schools where individuals worked, the average effect (i.e., the average slope) of

SUPPORT on BELIEF was positive across individuals. Thus, only the relationship between TEXT and BELIEF was appropriate for testing a cross-level interaction.

As shown in Table 1, OPEN-M was a significant negative predictor of the variance in the slope of TEXT, explaining 33% of the variance in the slope of TEXT. This finding indicated that the effect of TEXT on BELIEF became less positive and more negative as scores on OPEN-M increased. That is, in the schools that had more open communication climates (OPEN-M), teachers who were less likely to endorse a textbook-based learning (TEXT) showed stronger belief in alternative assessment effectiveness (BELIEF). Thus, the data were consistent with H4a but not with H4b.

Discussion

The current study examined how teachers' perceptions of the openness of their communication climate, support from school constituencies and endorsement of a textbook-based learning are related to their beliefs in alternative assessment effectiveness among Korean elementary school teachers. It also examined a cross-level interaction of school-level predictors for the relationship between the individual-level predictors and the individual-level dependent variable.

Previous studies have discussed the necessary conditions for the successful implementation of alternative assessment such as utilisation of external information to guide development, the technical reliability of the assessment, public perceptions of the fairness of the assessment, coordination with associated reforms, reasonableness of the timeline and the politics of reform and the professional development provided to teachers (Khattri, Reeve, & Adamson, 1997). The current study highlighted additional significant factors: the openness of the communication climate and support from school constituencies.

The findings showed that teachers' perceptions of the openness of the communication climate at their schools had a direct relationship, as well as a moderated relationship, on the teachers' beliefs in alternative assessment effectiveness. The more likely teachers were to perceive an open communication climate in their schools, the stronger the belief teachers had in alternative assessment effectiveness. Additionally, in schools with a more open communication climate, weaker endorsement of traditional textbook-based learning was associated with stronger beliefs in alternative assessment effectiveness. A possibility for this moderated effect is that, in schools with a more open communication climate, teachers may be more likely to be exposed to information about alternative assessment and thus may have stronger confidence in its effectiveness. In those schools, teachers dissatisfied with traditional textbook-based learning may be more strongly encouraged to implement alternative assessment. For example, they may engage in developing open questions

that demand creativity and incorporate real world tasks beyond the boundary of the textbook.

The findings of the current study showed the impact of an open communication in organisations. An open communication climate significantly enhances performance in organisations by facilitating continuous and free exchange of information among organisational members. Organisations with an open and supportive communication climate tend to outperform those with a more restrictive climate (Rapert & Wren, 1998; Rapert, Veliquette, & Garretson, 2002). This also applies to educational settings: schools that encourage open communication for decision-making were found to be more effective (Heck & Marcoulides, 1996). In the same vein, an open communication climate that encourages innovation is also important in educational settings. At the implementation level, group discussion of assessment issues may be an effective tool for the social construction of new ideas and practices. Through the process of questioning, clarification, negotiation and consensus-building, school constituencies may reach a better understanding of alternative assessment (Borko, Mayfield, Marion, Flexer, & Cumbo, 1997).

Support from school constituencies was a significant factor at both the individual and school levels. DiMartino et al. (2007) argued that lending sufficient levels of organisational support in all domains associated with reform is crucial to the successful implementation of alternative assessment. A carefully designed communication plan is needed to induce support from staff, parents, students and community members regarding the school's assessment system. There have been many debates about the purposes and methods of alternative assessment and their impact on the process of teaching and learning. These debates focus on how changes in assessment practices and procedures can contribute to educational reform and raising standards (Broadfoot, 1995). In the middle of this controversy, schools have not been able to convince the public of the superiority of alternative assessment over traditional standardised tests (Prestine & McGreal, 1997). In the case of Korea, the bureaucratic chain of command in the education system made it almost impossible for each school to discuss alternative assessment before its implementation and consequently caused serious misunderstandings and confusion (Huh et al., 1999). Therefore, as the findings of the current study suggested, support from school constituencies is essential to convince teachers of the effectiveness of alternative assessment.

Limitations and Directions for Future Studies

The current study investigated teachers' belief in the effectiveness of alternative assessment, but this is only one of the many issues surrounding new assessment methods. There are many other dependent variables to measure such as the improvement of student performance and commit-

ment, motivation of teachers and students, perceived quality of education and satisfaction, to name just a few.

The current study looked into teachers' perspectives on alternative assessment. Future research needs to examine the perspectives of other school constituencies such as students. Alternative assessment changes the role of students in the evaluation process. Students become active participants in assessment activities that are designed to reveal their in-depth understanding, rather than their weaknesses (Hart, 1994). If students have difficulties with adjusting to new assessment systems, however, negative consequences may arise, such as increased anxiety and decreased self-esteem. A more complete picture can be understood by examining whether students' expectations about and actual performances in alternative assessment would match teachers' perspectives.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study indicated that an open communication climate may have a positive impact on teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of alternative assessment. Without teachers' strong beliefs, the desired goal of alternative assessment cannot be achieved. Understanding and discovering ways to encourage teachers will be one step forward in improving students' educational prospects.

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