Issues in Education

Ratnawati Mohd Asraf

IIUM PRESS
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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IIUM Press

Published by:
IIUM Press
International Islamic University Malaysia

First Edition, 2011

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Edited By:
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf
Issues in Education
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf

ISBN: 978-967-418-055-3

Member of Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia - MAPIM
(Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council)

Printed by :
IIUM PRINTING SDN. BHD.
No. 1, Jalan Industri Batu Caves 1/3
Taman Perindustrian Batu Caves
Batu Caves Centre Point
68100 Batu Caves
Selangor Darul Ehsan

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STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

Noor Lide Abu Kassim

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, considerable efforts have been made towards ensuring that the process of setting standards is a rational and defensible one. This is evidenced by the voluminous literature on standard setting methods (e.g., Berk, 1986; Cizek, 2001; Jaeger, 1993; Wright, 1993) and the validation of set standards (e.g., Hambleton, 2001; Kane, 1994, 2001; Norcini & Shea, 1997; Pellegrino et al., 1999; Stone, 1996;). However, to date, the issue of the "right" method has remained unresolved. For many, it may never be resolved as it has been clearly established that different standard setting methods yield different results (e.g., Jaeger, 1993; Kane, 2001; Zieky, 2001).

With the increasing use of standardized testing, increasing concerns pertaining to fairness in testing and legal issues, and emphasis on meeting rigorous cut scores, the selection and use of the "right" standard setting method has become more complicated and pressing. To meet these new demands, methods which were initially developed for use with selected-response items have now been modified to deal with constructed response items (CR) and other item formats (Mitzel, Lewis, Patz& Green, 2001). New methods, such as the Bookmark Procedure, the Body of Work Method (BoW), the Analytic Judgment Method, Cluster Analysis, the Integrated Holistic Judgment Method, the Item-mapping Method, and the Objective Standard Setting Method (OSS) have also been developed to meet the more rigorous requirements in the setting educational standards(see Cizek, 2001).

Given the significant role of standards in educational monitoring and assessment, the primary purpose of this paper is to review the use of