Comparing Human and Automated Essay Scoring for Prospective Graduate Students with Learning Disabilities and/or ADHD

Heather Buzick, Maria Elena Oliveri, Yigal Attali & Michael Flor

Applied Measurement in Education
DOI:10.1080/08957347.2016.1171765

Abstract

Automated essay scoring is a developing technology that can provide efficient scoring of large numbers of written responses. Its use in higher education admissions testing provides an opportunity to collect validity and fairness evidence to support current uses and inform its emergence in other areas such as K-12 large-scale assessment. In this study, human and automated scores on essays written by college students with and without learning disabilities and/or ADHD were compared, using a nationwide (U.S.) sample of prospective graduate students taking the revised GRE. The findings are that, on average, human raters and the automated scoring engine assigned similar essay scores for all groups, despite average differences among groups with respect to essay length and spelling errors.