



NUMERACY ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR LABORATORY HIGH SCHOOL OF UNIVERSITY OF ANTIQUE: ITS PRACTICALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the influence of practicality of Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) to teachers' effectiveness in teaching Mathematics for Laboratory High School of University of Antique for the School Year 2023-2024. The descriptive-survey design was used using the research-made questionnaire. Frequency count, percentage, mean, Mann-Whitney U Test, Kruskal Wallis H Test, and Spearman Rank Correlation Test were used. Results showed that the level of practicality of the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) when taken as a whole group and when classified according to variables was "highly practical" and "very highly effective" for the level of effectiveness but "highly effective" when classified according to grade levels 7 to 10. There was no significant difference in the level of practicality and level of teachers' effectiveness using the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) when classified according to categories of variables. There was no significant influence in the respondents' level of practicality to teachers' effectiveness in using the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT).

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Keywords: *Numeracy Assessment Tool, Laboratory High School, University of Antique, Practicality, and Effectiveness*

INTRODUCTION

Mathematics is all around us! Indeed, everyone must be capable to add great deal of value and love in discovering the importance of enhancing arithmetic abilities in order to properly navigate everyday decisions and skills. Youngsters, who can count to ten, comprehend and apply mathematical ideas, are better equipped to describe and make sense of their environment.

To develop logical thinking and reasoning abilities for problem-solving, and to build a grasp of time, numbers, patterns, and forms in everyday tasks like cooking, reading recipes, reviewing invoices, and even participating in sports, a person must be numerate.

The ability to apply, deduce, and draw connections between mathematical knowledge in order to solve problems in practical settings is known as numeracy ability. Likewise, the fundamental arithmetic operation as a branch of Mathematics, is indeed necessary for it basically comprises of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division in which learners should study.

Therefore, it may be argued that by boosting learners' self-assurance and ability to study, arithmetic and numeracy abilities equip learners for the twenty-first century.

According to the National Numeracy Council (2014), numeracy is the capability to use numbers, and solve problems in real life. It is about having self-assurance, and aptitude to apply

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mathematical concepts, and techniques to challenges in daily life. It is the capacity to apply newly acquired knowledge to address issues in practical settings. The goal of the Philippine educational system then is to shape learners who are proficient in Mathematics in addition to being numerate.

According to the National Research Council's book, "Adding It Up", (2001), referenced in Garg (2017), a person must complete five strands in order to be considered proficient in Mathematics. The components of mathematical competency are conceptual knowledge, procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptable thinking, and productive disposition. At the most basic level, learners are expected to use the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) to evaluate the learners' numeracy or proficiency in terms of speed and comprehension.

NumAT was not intended to be used as a stand-alone tool; rather, it was created with flexibility to meet the demands of both teachers and learners and to raise their numeracy and proficiency.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Method

A descriptive method was used in the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2007), a descriptive method was used to describe a given situation as fully and carefully as possible. The gathered data determined the numeracy assessment tool's advantages and disadvantages for teachers' effectiveness in teaching Mathematics in the new normal.

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Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered because it determined the connection between the use of a numeracy assessment tool and teacher effectiveness in teaching Mathematics in the laboratory high school.

Descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon (McCombes, 2019).

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were five Mathematics teachers and 80 junior high school learners from the laboratory high school of the University of Antique during the school year 2023-2024.

The data are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by the Laboratory High School Teachers Teaching Mathematics and Junior High School Learners at the University of Antique

Respondents	N	%
Mathematics Teachers	5	5.88
Grade 7 Learners	20	23.53
Grade 8 Learners	20	23.53
Grade 9 Learners	20	23.53

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Grade 10 Learners	20	23.53
Total	85	100.00

Sampling Design

The sample size of this study was identified through quota sampling. According to Nikolopoulou (2022), quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method that relies on the non-random selection of predetermined number or proportion of units.

Two-stage sampling design was used to obtain the desired number of respondents from the laboratory high school of the University of Antique during the school year 2023-2024. The total population was used for teachers teaching Mathematics, and quota sampling was used for learners in Junior High School.

Research Instrument

Researcher-made instrument was designed to facilitate the collection of data. The instruments were taken and modified from the study of Teneso (2017). It was submitted to the thesis adviser and research consultants for content validation. Comments were considered for the improvement of the construction of the items.

The research instrument was divided into three (3) parts.

Part 1 contained information on the personal profile of respondents. It included the name of the respondent, which was optional; length of teaching experience that was categorized into

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short and long; parent’s educational background categorized into elementary, high school, and college levels; grade level; and distance from residence to school categorized into short and long.

In Part 2, teachers rated the level of practicality of the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) used by teachers in teaching Mathematics. It consisted of 30 items. Teachers assessed the level of practicability of NumAT according to the rating and responses below:

Rating	Responses
5	Very Highly Practiced
4	Highly Practiced
3	Moderately Practiced
2	Less Practiced
1	Not Practiced

Part 3 was all about assessing the level of teachers’ effectiveness in teaching Mathematics using the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT). It consisted of 20 items. The learners rated teachers’ effectiveness in teaching Mathematics according to the rating and responses below.

Rating	Responses
5	Very Often
4	Often
3	Sometimes
2	Seldom

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Validity of the Research Instrument

The researcher-made questionnaire had undergone content validation by the panel of experts.

The Criteria for Content Validation by Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) was used to determine the validity of the items in the questionnaire. When the panel of experts answered positively the items in the criteria, the questionnaire was considered valid; however, there were corrections or suggestions given that were incorporated into the questionnaire to improve the latter; those were also considered by the researcher in the final draft. After the revision had been made, the final draft was submitted to the panel of experts again for their approval. The final questionnaire was then reproduced for reliability testing.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

When the questionnaire was found valid, it was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha. The researcher reproduced the questionnaire equal to the number of respondents and administered it to 30 respondents who were Mathematics teachers and Junior High School learners at Laboratory High School at the University of Antique, who were not included as respondents in the final administration of the questionnaire.

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According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) if the result of the computation is 0.70 or above, it means that the questionnaire is reliable because a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher means high reliability.

Questionnaires were found valid and reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.928 and 0.896, respectively, so they were considered an appropriate instrument to gather data regarding the level of practicality of the numeracy assessment tool and teacher effectiveness using the tool in the laboratory high school.

Data-Gathering Procedures

The researcher formulated a letter of request and sent it to the principals of the target schools to conduct the study with the respondents. When permission was granted, the researcher personally administered the survey and started the distribution and administration of the questionnaire to all the respondents. The researcher solicited the cooperation and understanding of the school heads and respondents to ensure easy retrieval and gathering of the questionnaires. Compliance with the research ethics protocol was also done through signed informed consent to ensure the dignity of the respondents.

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Data Analyses

The research instrument was reproduced based on the number of respondents to the study. After retrieval of the completed questionnaire, the data was organized, computed, and tabulated. The following rating scale and description were used in the interpretation of the results:

For the level of practicality of Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT), the scale and description below were used:

Scale	Description
4.21-5.00	Very Highly Practical
3.41-4.20	Highly Practical
2.61-3.40	Moderately Practical
1.81-2.60	Less Practical
1.00-1.80	Not Practical

For teachers' level of effectiveness in teaching Mathematics using Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT), learners used the scale of means and description below:

Scale of Means	Description
4.21-5.00	Very Highly Effective
3.41-4.20	Highly Effective
2.61-3.40	Moderately Effective
1.81-2.60	Less Effective

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1.00-1.80

Not Effective

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software was used on the computer for computations, analysis, and interpretations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study was undertaken to find out the level of practicality of Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) and teachers' effectiveness in teaching Mathematics using Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) for the laboratory high school of the University of Antique during the school year 2023-2024.

Respondents of the study were 80 Junior High School learners and five Mathematics teachers from the Laboratory High School of the University of Antique.

Respondents were classified according to the following categories of variables: length of teaching experience, parent's educational background, grade level, and distance from residence to school.

Data were gathered through the use of questionnaire which was subjected to content validity and reliability. Collected data were analyzed and interpreted with the use of frequency count, percentage, mean, Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal-Wallis H test, and Spearman Rank Correlation test.

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The frequency count was used to tabulate and organize the data. The mean of the scores in the questionnaire was used to determine the level of practicality and effectiveness of using the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) for the respondents as a whole, grouped, and classified according to the categories of variables selected.

If the score is above the mean, the level of practicality and effectiveness are considered "very highly practical and very highly effective, respectively.

To find out whether there was a significant difference in the responses when the respondents were classified according to the categories of variables selected, the researcher used the Mann-Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis H Test for independent samples. If the t-probability of the obtained t-ratio was found to be less than the pre-set 0.05 level of significance, the difference was significant.

To determine the significant difference between three or more categories, the researcher used the Kruskal-Wallis H test. The Spearman Rank Correlation test was used to find out whether the level of practicality was influenced by teachers' effectiveness in teaching Mathematics using the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT).

The difference and influence were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. All statistical computations were subjected to computerized statistical treatment using Microsoft Excel and SPSS software.

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Results were analyzed and interpreted, after which conclusions were drawn and recommendations were advanced.

The following were the findings of the study:

The level of practicality of the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) as assessed by the teachers when taken as a whole group and when classified according to variables such as length of teaching experience and distance from residence to school was "highly practical".

There was no significant difference in the level of practicality of the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) as assessed by the teachers when classified according to categories of variables such as length of teaching experience and distance from residence to school.

When the learners evaluated the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) as a whole and categorized it based on factors such as the parents' educational background (high school and college levels), the learners' grade level (Grades 8 and 9), and the distance (short and long) from their home to school, results showed that the tool was "very highly effective".

Furthermore, based on grade levels 7 and 10, it received a "highly effective" rating.

There were no significant differences in the level of teachers' effectiveness in using Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) when classified according to the categories of variables such as parents' educational background, grade level, and distance from residence to school.

There was no significant influence on the respondents' level of practicality on teachers' effectiveness in using numeracy assessment tools.

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CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were formulated:

Teachers, regardless of their length of teaching experience and distance from residence to school, believed that the use of Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) in determining the numeracy skills of the learners was very practical. Through this, they would be able to see the current performance of the learners in numeracy, and proper and immediate intervention could be done if needed.

Teachers had common perception of the importance and practicality of the assessment tool for numeracy regardless of their length of teaching experience and distance from residence to school.

Learners were satisfied with the use or how the teachers were able to use the Numeracy Assessment Tool (NumAT) because, for them, it was very effective during the conduct of tests. They found it comfortable and manageable.

Learners had a common assessment of the effectiveness of teachers' use of numeracy assessment tools. All of them found it very highly effective and strongly agreed with the importance of the assessment tool in assessing their numeracy skills.

Learners found out that parents' educational backgrounds in high school and college were very effective as they used of the numeracy assessment tool.

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The practicality of the use of the assessment tool had nothing to do with the effectiveness of the teachers in using it during assessment tests.

Teachers' effectiveness in teaching through the use the tool during assessment tests had nothing to do with how the tool was practically administered to the learners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations are forwarded:

Mathematics teachers should maximize their resourcefulness and creativity in improving their strategies and skills in teaching that are suited to the abilities of their learners, thereby, helping them to become effective Mathematics teachers. They should equip themselves with the modern trends of teaching Mathematics by using advanced technological-aided instructional facilities such as computers, computer programs, audiovisual media, and media in the form of prints, which could supplement normal teaching, to stimulate and sustain the interest of learners.

Educators, from the classroom teachers to the administrators and the school boards, must set higher standards and more demanding expectations for the teaching and learning of Mathematics at all levels.

Enrichment activities will ensure the capabilities of learners in performing well using the numeracy skills assessment.

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The school should take the necessary steps to make parents realize their roles in motivating their children to develop a good study attitude. This should be done with the help of the guidance program of the school by informing parents about the performance of their children in school.

A Mathematics teacher should be aware of the positive role models that they can set for their learners. They should continue enhancing and cultivating attitudes among learners towards the subject by encouraging them to give schoolwork a priority over extracurricular activities.

Individual instruction for learners is also necessary so as to give significant support learners who have specific learning difficulties. A one-on-one ratio of teacher to learner may be ideal. This allows for personalized instruction and targeted interventions.

For small group instruction, a ratio of 1 teacher to 4-6 learners can be effective. This allows for some individualized attention while promoting peer interaction and collaborative learning.

In whole-class instruction, a ratio of 1 teacher to 20–30 learners is common. However, it is important for the teacher to differentiate instruction and provide extra support to learners who may be struggling with numeracy skills.

In view of the limitations of the study, it is recommended that further studies should be conducted along this line, and the variable educational qualification should be considered and tested for significance to see whether similar results would appear.

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It is also recommended that other variables not mentioned in the study should be considered, and similar studies could also be conducted in other venues.



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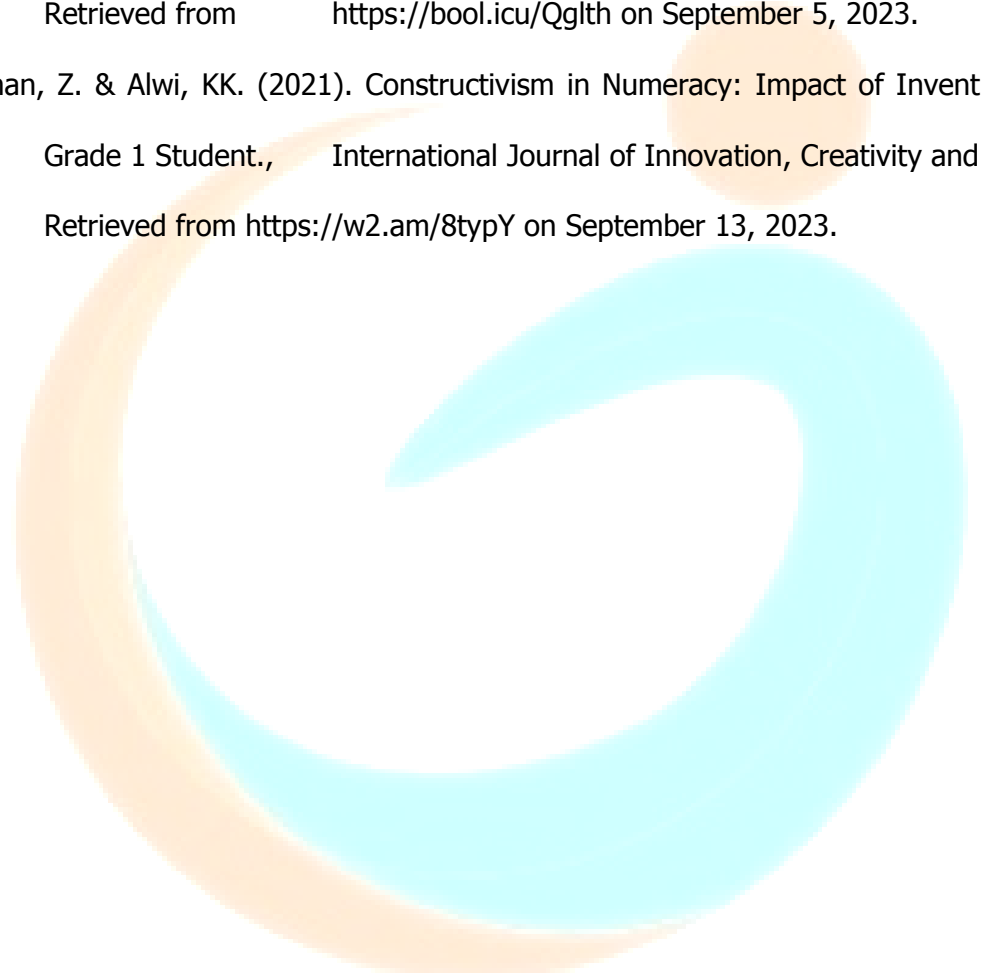
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