

ZMATH 06655655

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Primary teachers' experiences relating to the administration processes of high-stakes testing: the case of mathematics annual national assessments.

Afr. J. Res. Math. Sci. Technol. Educ. 18, No. 3, 299-310 (2014).

Summary: In this paper we highlight teacher experiences of the administration of high-stakes testing, in particular, of the 2012 Annual National Assessments (ANAs). The exploration is based on data gathered across two primary numeracy teacher development projects in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng in the form of open-ended questionnaires designed to elicit teacher experiences of the 2012 Numeracy ANAs (at Grades 1–3) and Mathematics ANAs (Grades 4–6). Fifty-four teachers across 21 schools (including fee-paying and non-fee-paying schools) completed the questionnaire. Using a grounded approach to the analysis of data, we note that, while teachers state support for the purpose of the ANAs, several concerns emerge in relation to their administration. These concerns fall largely into two categories: concern for learner experiences and concern for the implications of the administration processes (including the use of exemplars and the marking process) for teacher practices. The primary purpose of the paper is to raise awareness of the need for further discussion and research into the way in which ANAs result in possible unintended consequences.

Classification: C29 D62 D63

Keywords: annual national assessments; primary mathematics; numeracy

doi:10.1080/10288457.2014.965406