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Comparative Studies of Mathematical Literacy/Education: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT The purpose of Mathematical Literacy is to ensure that all learners develop an understanding of Mathematics and how to relate it to the world in order to use mathematical information and to make valuable decisions affecting their life, work and society. Mathematical Literacy is not a clearly defined term and internationally there exists a range of different conceptions of Mathematical Literacy. This study examines the concept of mathematical Literacy/education from the national and international perspectives. Comparisons are also made between different conceptions of Mathematical Literacy/education in countries like South Africa, Kenya, China, Australia and United States of America, and the contexts in which mathematical literacy/education can be applied in these countries. Mathematical Literacy educators across the world need to be conversant and knowledgeable about the vast array of topics. They must be able to understand everyday situations, for example, accounts, building calculations, pyramid schemes and so forth, to make the learners aware of how these issues are dealt with in real life.