

Rural Learners' Views and Perceptions about Their Experiences in Word Problem Solving

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ABSTRACT Research conducted in South African schools on word problems has provided little or no information on the reasons associated with poor academic achievement in word problem solving, except those linked to issues of reality and common sense in problem-solving processes. It is therefore against this background that the study reported in this paper sought to provide an overview of factors that are associated with poor academic achievement of primary school learners within South African classroom contexts. To do this, the study followed a qualitative approach by using a focus group discussion with a group of six Grade 6 learners. In brief, the findings of the study outlined in this paper seem to suggest that the mathematics academic achievements of Grade 6 learners in mathematics word problems solving are affected by a number of variables such as mathematical language use, text comprehension and terminology, understanding operations embedded in the text, concepts and vocabulary clarity, as well as the structure of the word problem.